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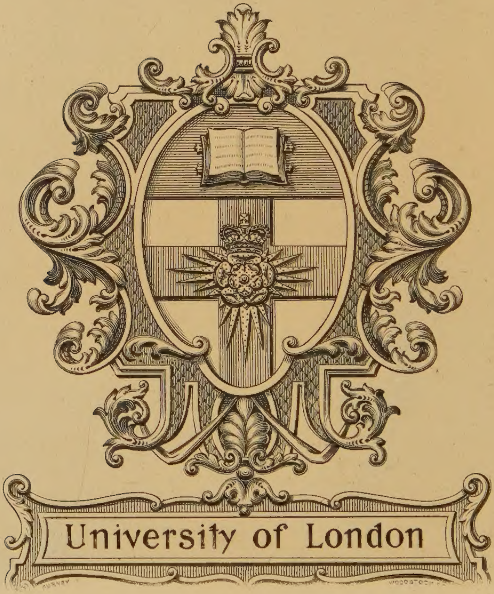
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THE

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

(AUTHORISED EDITION),

FOURTH SERIES.

FIRST SESSION OF THE TWENTY-EIGHTH PARLIAMENT

OF THE

UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND

6 EDWARD VII.

VOLUME CLIII.

COMPRISING THE PERIOD FROM THE FIFTH DAY OF MARCH
TO THE SIXTEENTH DAY OF MARCH 1906.

SECOND VOLUME OF SESSION.

1906.

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THE PARLIAMENTARY HISTORY contains all that can be collected of the Legislative History of this country from the Conquest to the close of the XVIIIth Century (1803), 36 vols. The chief sources whence these Debates are derived are the Constitutional History, 24 vols.; Sir Simonds D'Ewes' Journal; Debates of the Commons in 1620 and 1621; Chandler and Timberland's Debates, 22 vols.; Grey's Debates of the Commons, from 1667 to 1694, 10 vols.; Almon's Debates, 24 vols.; Debrett's Debates, 63 vols.; The Hardwicke Papers; Debates in Parliament by Dr. Johnson, &c., &c.

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RUSSIA (NEW CUSTOMS TARIFF) (INTERIM STATEMENT).—Translation of the New Customs Tariff of Russia, as modified by commercial treaties with Germany and France 5

STATISTICS.

Statistical Abstract for the British Empire in each year from 1890 to 1904. Second Number.

Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table 5

PUBLIC RECORDS.

(Northern Circuit).—Schedule containing a list and particulars of classes of documents existing or accruing in the office of the Clerk of Assize of the Northern Circuit which are not considered of sufficient public value to justify their preservation in the Public Record Office.

(Board of Agriculture and Fisheries (Ordnance Survey)).—Schedule containing a list and particulars of a class of documents belonging to the office of the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries (Ordnance Survey Department) which is now in the Public Record Office, but is not considered of sufficient public value to justify preservation therein 5

UNIVERSITIES (SCOTLAND) ACT, 1889.

Annual Statistical Report by the University Court of the University of Aberdeen to the Secretary for Scotland under the provisions of Section 30 of the Universities (Scotland) Act, 1889, for the year 1904–1905.

Annual Report on the state of the Finances of the University ot Aberdeen under the provisions of Section 30 of the Universities (Scotland) Act, 1889, for the year 1904–1905.

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table 5

NEW BILLS.

Polling Districts (County Councils) Bill [H.L.] (No. 22).—A Bill to make further provision with respect to the arrangement of polling districts for the election of county councillors: and

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Polling Arrangements (Parliamentary Boroughs) Bill [H.L.] (No. 23).—A Bill to amend the law relating to the arrangement of polling districts in Parliamentary boroughs:

Were presented by the Lord Monkswell; Read 1ª; to be printed; and to be read 2ª on Monday next 6

Standing Orders Committee.—Appointed: The Lords following, with the Chairman of Committees, were named of the Committee: E. Crewe (*L. President*), D. Bedford, D. Marlborough, D. Northumberland, M. Lansdowne, M. Salisbury, M. Bath, E. Derby, E. Denbigh, E. Chesterfield, E. Jersey, E. Lauderdale, E. Waldegrave, E. Cadogan, E. Howe, E. Amherst, E. Camperdown, E. Dartrey, E. Lytton, E. Carrington, V. Sidmouth, V. Knutsford, V. Churchill, L. Zouche of Haryngworth, L. Barnard, L. Balfour, L. Ribblesdale, L. Colchester, L. Poltimore, L. Kintore (*E. Kintore*), L. Belper, L. Brougham and Vaux, L. Kinnaird, L. Hylton, L. Fermanagh (*E. Erne*), L. Herries, L. Monkswell, L. Newton, L. Welby, L. Ludlow.

All petitions relating to the Standing Orders which shall be presented during the present session referred to the Committee unless otherwise ordered 6

House of Lords Offices.—Select Committee appointed: the Lords following with the Lord Chancellor, the Lord President, the Lord Privy Seal, and the Chairman of Committees, were named of the Committee: D. Northumberland, M. Bath, M. Cholmondeley, M. Breadalbane, E. Liverpool (*L. Steward*), E. Clarendon, E. Chesterfield, E. Waldegrave, E. Spencer, E. Mount Edgcumbe, E. Belmore, E. Cawdor, E. Camperdown, E. Cranbrook, E. Ancaster, E. Carrington, E. Halsbury, E. Plymouth, V. Gordon (*E. Aberdeen*), V. Hampden, V. Cross, V. Peel, V. Knutsford, V. Churchill, L. Balfour, L. Ribblesdale, L. Colchester, L. Rosebery (*E. Rosebery*), L. Kintore (*E. Kintore*), L. Belper, L. Tweedmouth, L. Monk Bretton, L. Macnaghten, L. Welby, L. Burghclere 7

Committee of Selection.—The Lords following, viz,: E. Waldegrave, V. Churchill, L. Ribblesdale, L. Denman; with the Chairman of Committees, were appointed a Committee to select and propose to the House the names of the five Lords to form a Select Committee for the consideration of each opposed Private Bill 7

Standing Committee.—Ordered, That a Standing Committee be appointed for the consideration of such Public Bills as may be committeed to it by the House 7

Committee of Selection for the Standing Committee.—Appointed: The Lords following, with the Chairman of Committees, were named of the Committee: E. Liverpool (*L. Steward*), E. Jersey, E. Waldegrave, V. Churchill, L. Balfour, L. Ribblesdale, L. Kintore (*E. Kintore*), L. Lawrence 7

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Viscount Halifax 24
The Earl of Elgin 26
The Duke of Marlborough 30
The President of the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries (*Earl Carrington*) 32
The Earl of Stradbroke 35

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Lord Newton 38
The First Lord of the Admiralty (*Lord Tweedmouth*) 42

House adjourned at twenty minutes before Seven o'clock, till To-morrow, half-past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS: MONDAY, 5TH MARCH, 1906.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

One other Member took and subscribed the Oath.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS (STANDING ORDER 62 COMPLIED WITH).—Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bills, referred on the First Reading thereof, Standing Order No. 62 has been complied with, viz.:—Ascot District Gas (Electric Lighting) Bill; Brixham Gas (Electric Lighting) Bill; Cheltenham Gas Bill; London and South Western Railway Bill; Rochester, Chatham, and Strood Gas Bill.

Ordered, That the Bills be read a second time 44

PROVISIONAL ORDER BILLS (STANDING ORDERS APPLICABLE THERETO COMPLIED WITH).—Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That in the case of the following Bill, referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders which are applicable thereto have been complied with, viz.:—Metropolitan Police Provisional Order Bill.

Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time To-morrow.

Cardiff Gas Bill.—Read a second time, and committed 44

Derby Gas Bill.—Read a second time, and committed 44

Dowlais Gas Bill.—Epsom and Ewell Gas Bill; Great Eastern Railway Bill. —Read a second time, and committed 44

London and India Docks and Millwall Dock Companies Bill.—Read a second time, and committed 44

Merthyr Tydfil Gas Bill.—Read a second time, and committed 44

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Millwall Dock Bill.—Read a second time, and committed 45

Peterborough Gas Bill.—St. John's (Westminster) Improvement Bill; South Metropolitan Gas Bill; South Suburban Gas Bill.—Read a second time, and committed 45

Southampton Gas Bill.—Sutton, Southcoates, and Drypool Gas Bill; Tottenham and Edmonton Gas Bill.—Read a second time, and committed 45

Watford Gas Bill.—Read a second time, and committed 45

Bristol Corporation Bill (BY ORDER).—Read a second time, and committed 45

St. Pancras Electricity Bill (BY ORDER).—Read a second time, and committed 45

PETITIONS.

ELEMENTARY EDUCATION (RELIGIOUS TEACHING IN CHURCH OF ENGLAND SCHOOLS).—Petition from Burythorpe, against alteration of law; to lie upon the Table 45

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

PRISONS (SCOTLAND).—Paper [Presented 2nd March] to be printed. [No. 74.] .. 45

ARMY ESTIMATES, 1906–7.—Copy presented, of Army Estimates of Effective and Non-Effective Services for the year ending 31st March, 1907 [by Command]; Referred to the Committee of Supply, and to be printed. [No. 73]. 45

ARMY (ORDNANCE FACTORIES ESTIMATES, 1906–7).—Estimate presented, of the sum required for the year ending 31st March, 1907, to defray the Expense of the Ordnance Factories [by Command]; Referred to the Committee of Supply, and to be printed. [No. 75.] 45

ARMY (MEMORANDUM ON ESTIMATES).—Copy presented, of Memorandum of the Secretary of State relating to the Army Estimates of 1906–7 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 45

NAVAL WORKS.—Copy presented, of Memorandum showing Progress and Expenditure, etc., on Items included in the Naval Works Act [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 46

IRISH LAND COMMISSION (PROCEEDINGS).—Copy presented, of Return of Proceedings during the month of January, 1906 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 46

ECCLESIASTICAL COMMISSION.—Copy presented, of Fifty-eighth Report from the Ecclesiastical Commissioners for England, with an Appendix [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 46

CHURCH ESTATES COMMISSION.—Copy presented, of Fifty-fifth Report from the Church Estates Commissioners for the year preceding 1st March, 1906 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 46

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UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN.—Copy presented, of Annual Statistical Report by the University Court of the University of Aberdeen for 1904–5 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 76.] 46

UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN.—Copy presented, of Abstract of Accounts of the University of Aberdeen for the year ending 15th September, 1905 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 77.] 46

RUSSIA (NEW CUSTOMS TARIFF) (INTERIM STATEMENT).—Copy presented, of Translation of the New Customs Tariff of Russia as modified by Commercial Treaties with Germany and France [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 46

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2. Public Records (Board of Agriculture and Fisheries), Copy of Schedule containing a List and Particulars of Classes of Documents existing or accruing in the Office of the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries (Ordnance Survey Department) which are not considered of sufficient public value to justify their preservation in the Public Record Office [by Act]. 47

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School Board Electorate (Scotland) Bill.—"To admit to the School Board Electorate of Scotland persons entitled to vote for the County Council Election," presented by Mr. Weir; supported by Mr. Alpheus C. Morton, Mr. John Dewar, Mr. Leicester Harmsworth, Mr. Ainsworth, Mr. Cathcart Wason, Mr. J. A. Bryce, and Mr. A. Williamson; to be read a second time upon Friday, 30th March, and to be printed. [Bill 67.] .. 110

Dogs (Protection) Bill.—"To prohibit experiments upon Dogs," presented by Mr. Ellis Griffith; supported by Colonel Lockwood, Mr. Channing Mr. Field, Mr. Weir, Mr. Sloan, Mr. Tomkinson, Mr. Crooks, Mr. Clement Edwards, Mr. Swift MacNeill, and Colonel Sandys; to be read a second time upon Thursday next, and to be printed. [Bill 68.] 110

HOUSE OF COMMONS (PROCEDURE).

The Select Committee on House of Commons (Procedure) was nominated of, Mr. Blake, Mr. Charles Craig, Mr. Akers-Douglas, Mr. John Ellis, Mr. Samuel Evans, Mr. H. W. Forster, Sir Henry Fowler, Mr. Keir Hardie, Mr. Laurence Hardy, Sir Joseph Leese, Mr. McCrae, Mr. William Redmond, Mr. J. H. Whitley, Mr. Wood, and Sir James Woodhouse.

Ordered, That the Committee have power to send for persons, papers, and records.

Ordered, That the Committee have power to report from time to time.
Ordered, That Five be the quorum.—(*Mr. George Whiteley.*) 110

PUBLIC PETITIONS.

The Select Committee on Public Petitions was nominated of, Mr. E. Barry, Mr. Burt, Mr. Ellis Griffith, Mr. Leicester Harmsworth, Mr. Henniker Heaton, Colonel Kenyon-Slaney, Colonel Legge, Mr. McArthur, Mr. T. P. O'Connor, Mr. J. W. Philipps, Mr. Charles Shaw, Lord Willoughby de Eresby, Mr. Wills, and Mr. Henry J. Wilson.

Ordered, That Three be the Quorum.—(*Mr. George Whiteley*) 111

SUPPLY [1ST ALLOTTED DAY].

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. EMMOTT (Oldham) in the Chair.]

CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS ESTIMATES, 1906–7 (VOTE ON ACCOUNT).—Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £21,410,000, be granted to His Majesty, on account, for or towards defraying the charges for the following Civil Services and Revenue Departments for the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1907, viz. :—

CIVIL SERVICES.

CLASS II.

United Kingdom and England :—

	£
Home Office - - - - - - - - -	66,000

CLASS V.

Diplomatic and Consular Services - - - - - -	250,000

CLASS II.

United Kingdom and England :—

Local Government Board - - - - - -	86,000

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Class I.

	£
Royal Palaces	20,000
Osborne	8,000
Royal Parks and Pleasure Gardens	45,000
Houses of Parliament Buildings	20,000
Miscellaneous Legal Buildings, Great Britain	30,000
Art and Science Buildings, Great Britain	25,000
Diplomatic and Consular Buildings	54,000
Revenue Buildings	196,000
Public Buildings, Great Britain	200,000
Surveys of the United Kingdom	90,000
Harbours under the Board of Trade	6,000
Peterhead Harbour	10,000
Rates on Government Property	295,000
Public Works and Buildings, Ireland	110,000
Railways, Ireland	35,000

Class II.

United Kingdom and England :—

House of Lords Offices	7,000
House of Commons Offices	15,000
Treasury and Subordinate Departments	40,000
Foreign Office	24,000
Colonial Office	25,000
Privy Council Office, etc,	4,000
Board of Trade	85,000
Mercantile Marine Services	32,000
Bankruptcy Department of the Board of Trade	3
Board of Agriculture and Fisheries	55,000
Charity Commission	15,000
Civil Service Commission	17,000
Exchequer and Audit Department	25,000
Friendly Societies Registry	3,000
Lunacy Commission	5,000
Mint (including Coinage)	5
National Debt Office	6,000
Public Record Office	10,000
Public Works Loan Commission	1,000
Registrar-General's Office	15,000
Stationery and Printing	330,000
Woods, Forests, etc., Office of	8,000
Works and Public Buildings, Office of	34,000
Secret Service	40,000

Scotland :—

Secretary for Scotland, Office of	25,000
Fishery Board	5,000
Lunacy Commission	2,500
Registrar-General's Office	1,500
Local Government Board	5,000

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Ireland :—

	£
Lord-Lieutenant's Household	2,000
Chief Secretary for Ireland	12,000
Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction	80,000
Charitable Donations and Bequests Office	1,000
Local Government Board	25,000
Public Record Office	2,000
Public Works Office	16,000
Registrar-General's Office	5,000
Valuation and Boundary Survey	6,000

CLASS III.

United Kingdom and England :—

Law Charges	40,000
Miscellaneous Legal Expenses	28,000
Supreme Court of Judicature	140,000
Land Registry	18,000
County Courts	5
Police, England and Wales	13,000
Prisons, England and the Colonies	340,000
Reformatory and Industrial Schools, Great Britain	130,000
Broadmoor Criminal Lunatic Asulum	12,000

Scotland :—

Law Charges and Courts of Law	30,000
Register House, Edinburgh	15,000
Crofters' Commission, Scotland	2,000
Prisons, Scotland	37,000

Ireland :—

Law Charges and Criminal Prosecutions	30,000
Supreme Court of Judicature, and other Legal Departments	143,000
Land Commission	90,000
County Court Officers, &c.	45,000
Dublin Metropolitan Police	60,000
Royal Irish Constabulary	600,000
Prisons, Ireland	52,000
Reformatory and Industrial Schools	55,000
Dundrum Criminal Lunatic Asylum	4,000

CLASS IV.

United Kingdom and England :—

Board of Education	7,000,000
British Museum	70,000
National Gallery	10,000
National Portrait Gallery	3,000
Wallace Collection	3,000
Scientific Investigation, &c.	24,000
Universities and Colleges, Great Britain, and Intermediate Education, Wales	60,000

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Scotland :—

	£
Public Education	850,000
National Gallery	5,000

Ireland :—

Public Education	760,000
Endowed Schools Commissioners	400
National Gallery	2,500
Queen's Colleges	2,500

CLASS V.

Colonial Services	370,000
Telegraph Subsidies and Pacific Cable	30,000
Cyprus (Grant-in-Aid)	27,000

CLASS VI.

Superannuation and Retired Allowances	300,000
Miscellaneous Charitable and other Allowances	1,150
Hospitals and Charities, Ireland	17,000
Savings Banks and Friendly Societies Deficiencies	– –

CLASS VII.

Temporary Commissions	20,000
Miscellaneous Expenses	10,437
Repayments to the Local Loans Fund	–
Ireland Development Grant	100,000
Total for Civil Services	£13,980,000

REVENUE DEPARTMENTS.

Customs	£350,000
Inland Revenue	830,000
Post Office	6,250,000
Total for Revenue Departments	£7,430,000
Grand Total	£21,410,000

Mr. H. J. Tennant (Berwickshire) 115

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Item, Class 2, Vote 4 (Home Office), be reduced by £100."—(*Mr. H. J. Tennant.*)

Mr. J. R. Macdonald (Leicester) 119
Sir Charles Dilke (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean) 125
The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Gladstone, Leeds, W.) 127
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Mr. Trevelyan (Yorkshire, W. R., Elland) 134
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Mr. Stuart Samuel (*Tower Hamlets, Whitechapel*) .. 143
Mr. Maddison (*Burnley*) .. 145
Mr. G. A. Hardy (*Suffolk, Stowmarket*) .. 146
Sir Howard Vincent (*Sheffield, Central*) .. 147
Mr. J. R. Macdonald .. 148
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Sir Joseph Leese (*Lancashire, Accrington*) .. 152
Mr. Gladstone .. 153
Mr. Akers Douglas (*Kent. St. Augustine's*) .. 160
Colonel Lockwood (*Essex, Epping*) .. 163
Mr. Tomkinson (*Cheshire, Crewe*) .. 165
Sir John Tuke (*Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities*) .. 165
Mr. Pickersgill (*Bethnal Green, S.W.*) .. 166

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

Mr. Pickersgill .. 167
Mr. Arnold-Forster (*Croydon*) .. 169
Mr. Gladstone .. 170
Mr. T. P. O'Connor (*Liverpool, Scotland*) .. 171
Mr. Claude Hay (*Shoreditch, Hoxton*) .. 171

And, it being half-past Seven of the Clock, the Chairman left the Chair to make his Report to the House.

Committee report Progress ; to sit again this evening.

EVENING SITTING.

SUPPLY [1ST ALLOTTED DAY].

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. EMMOTT (Oldham), in the Chair.]

CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS ESTIMATES, 1906–7. (VOTE ON ACCOUNT).—Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £21, 410,000, be granted to His Majesty, on account, for or towards defraying the Charges for the following Civil Services and Revenue Departments for the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1907, viz.:—

CIVIL SERVICES.

CLASS II.

United Kingdom and England :—

Home Office - - - - - - - - - £66,000

CLASS V.

Diplomatic and Consular Services	250,000

CLASS II.

United Kingdom and England :—

Local Government Board	86,000

CLASS I.

Royal Palaces	20,000
Osborne	8,000
Royal Parks and Pleasure Gardens	45,000
Houses of Parliament Buildings	20,000
Miscellaneous Legal Buildings, Great Britain	30,000
Art and Science Buildings, Great Britain	25,000
Diplomatic and Consular Buildings	54,000
Revenue Buildings	196,000
Public Buildings, Great Britain	200,000
Surveys of the United Kingdom	90,000
Harbours under the Board of Trade	6,000
Peterhead Harbour	10,000
Rates on Government Property	295,000
Public Works and Buildings, Ireland	110,000
Railways, Ireland	35,000

CLASS II.

United Kingdom and England :—

House of Lords Offices	7,000
House of Commons Offices	15,000
Treasury and Subordinate Departments	40,000
Foreign Office	24,000
Colonial Office	25,000
Privy Council Office, etc.	4,000
Board of Trade	85,000
Mercantile Marine Services	32,000
Bankruptcy Department of the Board of Trade	3
Board of Agriculture and Fisheries	55,000
Charity Commission	15,000
Civil Service Commission	17,000
Exchequer and Audit Department	25,000
Friendly Societies Registry	3,000
Lunacy Commission	5,000
Mint (including Coinage)	5
National Debt Office	6,000
Public Record Office	10,000
Public Works Loan Commission	1,000
Registrar-General's Office	15,000
Stationery and Printing	330,000
Woods, Forests, &c., Office of	8,000
Works and Public Buildings, Office of	34,000
Secret Service	40,000

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Scotland :—

Secretary for Scotland, Office of - - - - - 25,000
Fishery Board - - - - - - - - 5,000
Lunacy Commission - - - - - - - 2,500
Registrar-General's Office - - - - - - 1,500
Local Government Board - - - - - - 5,000

Ireland :—

Lord-Lieutenant's Household - - - - - - 2,000
Chief Secretary for Ireland - - - - - - 12,000
Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction - 80,000
Charitable Donations and Bequests Office - - - - 1 000
Local Government Board - - - - - - 25 000
Public Record Office - - - - - - - 2,000
Public Works Office - - - - - - - 16,000
Registrar-General's Office - - - - - - 5,000
Valuation and Boundary Survey - - - - - 6,000

CLASS III.

United Kingdom and England :—

Law Charges - - - - - - - - - 40,000
Miscellaneous Legal Expenses - - - - - - 28,000
Supreme Court of Judicature - - - - - - 140,000
Land Registry - - - - - - - - 18,000
County Courts - - - - - - - - 5
Police, England and Wales - - - - - - 13,000
Prisons, England and the Colonies - - - - - 340,000
Reformatory and Industrial Schools, Great Britain - - 130,000
Broadmoor Criminal Lunatic Asylum - - - - 12,000

Scotland :—

Law Charges and Courts of Law - - - - - 30,000
Register House, Edinburgh - - - - - - 15,000
Crofters' Commission, Scotland - - - - - - 2 000
Prisons, Scotland - - - - - - - - 37,000

Ireland :—

Law Charges and Criminal Prosecutions - - - - - 30,000
Supreme Court of Judicature, and other Legal Departments 43,000
Land Commission - - - - - - - - 90,000
County Court Officers, &c. - - - - - - 45,000
Dublin Metropolitan Police - - - - - - 60,000
Royal Irish Constabulary - - - - - - - 600,000
Prisons, Ireland - - - - - - - - - 52,000
Reformatory and Industrial Schools - - - - - 55,000
Dundrum Criminal Lunatic Asylum - - - - - - 4,000

Class IV.

United Kingdom and England :—

Board of Education	7,000,000
British Museum	70,000
National Gallery	10,000
National Portrait Gallery	3,000
Wallace Collection	3,000
Scientific Investigation, etc.	24,000
Universities and Colleges, Great Britain, and Intermediate Education, Wales	60,000

Scotland :—

Public Education	850,000
National Gallery	5,000

Ireland :—

Public Education	760,000
Endowed Schools Commissioners	400
National Gallery	2,500
Queen's Colleges	2,500

Class V.

Colonial Services	370,000
Telegraph Subsidies and Pacific Cable	30,000
Cyprus (Grant-in-Aid)	27,000

Class VI.

Superannuation and Retired Allowances	300,000
Miscellaneous Charitable and other Allowances	1,150
Hospitals and Charities, Ireland	17,000
Savings Bank and Friendly Societies Deficiencies	———

Class VII.

Temporary Commissions	20,000
Miscellaneous Expenses	10,437
Repayments to the Local Loans Fund	———
Ireland Development Grant	100,000
Total for Civil Services	£13,980,000

Revenue Departments.

Customs	350,000
Inland Revenue	830,000
Post Office	6,250,000
Total for Revenue Departments	£7,430,000
Grand Total	£21,410,000

Mr. Boland (*Kerry, S.*) 176

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Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Item, Class 5, Vote 1 (Diplomatic and Consular Services), be reduced by £100."—(*Mr. Boland.*)

Mr. Paul (Northampton) 179
Mr. Charles Devlin (Galway) 183
Sir C. Hill (Shrewsbury) 184
Mr. Norman (Wolverhampton, S.) 184
Lord Balcarres (Lancashire, Chorley) 185
The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir Edward Grey, Northumberland, Berwick) 186

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Mr. Rees (Montgomery Boroughs) 194
Mr. Fell (Great Yarmouth) 195
Major Seely (Liverpool, Abercromby) 196

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Item, Class 5, Vote 1 (Diplomatic and Consular Services), be reduced by £200."—(*Major Seely.*)

Sir Edward Grey 196
Mr. W. Redmond (Clare, E.) 197
Mr. Claude Hay 198

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

Original Question again proposed.

Mr. Morton (Sutherland) 201

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Item, Class 2, Vote 6 (Colonial Office), be reduced by £100."—(*Mr. Morton.*)

Mr. J. Ward (Stoke-on-Trent) 203

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

Original Question again proposed.

Mr. Charles Hobhouse (Bristol, E.) 204

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Item, Class 2, Vote 24 (Woods and Forests, etc., Office of), be reduced by £100."—(*Mr. Charles Hobhouse.*)

Mr. Winfrey (Norfolk, S.W.) 206
The Financial Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. McKenna, Monmouthshire, N.) 207
Mr. Victor Cavendish (Derbyshire, W.) 208
Mr. Morton 209
Mr. Charles Hobhouse 209

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Original Question again proposed.

Mr. Weir (Ross and Cromarty) 209

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Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Item, Class 2, Vote 27 (Secretary for Scotland, Office of) be reduced by £100."—(*Mr. Weir.*)

Mr. John Dewar (*Inverness*) 211
Mr. Morton 214
The Secretary for Scotland (*Mr. Sinclair, Forfarshire*) 214

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Original Question put, and agreed to.

And, it being Midnight, the Chairman left the Chair to make his Report to the House.

Resolution to be reported this day. Committee to sit again to-morrow.

BUTTER TRADE.—Ordered, That a Select Committee be appointed to consider whether any, and if so, what further legislation is required in order to secure the better conduct and control of the Trade in Butter and Butter Substitutes.—(*Sir Edward Strachey*) 216

Adjourned at five minutes after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS: TUESDAY, 6TH MARCH, 1906.

Several Lords Took the Oath.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

The LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House, That the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the Certificates from the Examiners that the further Standing Orders applicable to the following Bills have been complied with: Great Yarmouth Waterworks and Lowestoft Water and Gas [H.L.]. Southport and Lytham Tramroad (Extension of Time) [H.L.]. Norwich Union Life Insurance Society [H.L.].

The same were ordered to lie on the Table 217

Kent Collieries Electricity Supply Bill [H.L.].—The Chairman of Committees informed the House that the Promoters do not intend to proceed further with the Bill. Ordered that the Bill be not further proceeded with 217

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

LICENSING ACT, 1904.—Treasury Minute dated 28th February, 1906, directing that the "Compensation Fund (Licensing Act, 1904) Account" shall be audited by the Comptroller and Auditor General 217

PRIVATE PROCEDURE (SCOTLAND) ACT, 1899.

Report by the Chairman of Committees of the House of Lords and the Chairman of Ways and Means in the House of Commons, under Section 2 of the Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899.

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That the provisions of the Edinburgh Corporation Order, the Highland and Great North of Scotland Railways Amalgamation Order, and of the Scottish Union and National Insurance Company Order, are of such a character that they ought to be dealt with by Private Bills and not by Provisional Orders.

That the Glasgow and South Western Railway Order may be allowed to proceed as an Order with the omission of Clause 14, which appears to contravene General Order No. 114.

That, save as aforesaid, the Provisional Orders be allowed to proceed subject to such recommendations as may be hereafter made with respect to the several Orders.

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table 217

Marine Insurance Bill [H.L.].—House in Committee (according to Order).

Clauses 1 to 15 agreed to.

Clause 16.

Earl Russell 218

Amendment moved—

"In Clause 16 (1), line 30, after the words 'engine stores if owned by the assured,' to insert the words 'and in the case of a ship propelled by mechanical means other than steam includes also the machinery, fuel, fuel-tanks, and engine stores if owned by the assured."—(*Earl Russell.*)

The Earl of Halsbury 218
Lord Montagu of Beaulieu 219
The Earl of Halsbury 219

Amendment, by leave of the House, withdrawn.

Clause 16 agreed to.

Remaining clauses agreed to, and Bill reported, without Amendment, to the House.

The Earl of Halsbury 220

Moved, "That the Standing Committee be negatived."—(*The Earl of Halsbury.*)

On Question, Motion agreed to. Bill to be read 3ª on Thursday next.

Prevention of Corruption Bill.—House in Committee (according to Order).

The Lord Chancellor (Lord Loreburn) 220

BILL REPORTED WITHOUT AMENDMENT TO THE HOUSE.

The Earl of Halsbury 220

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Moved, "That the Standing Committee be negatived."—(*The Earl of Halsbury.*)

On Question, Motion agreed to. Bill to be read 3ª on Thursday next.

ADMIRALTY POLICY.

Lord Brassey 221
The Earl of Glasgow 228
Viscount Goschen 234
Lord Ellenborough 243
Earl Cawdor 253
The First Lord of the Admiralty (*Lord Tweedmouth*) 260

House adjourned at half-past Seven o'clock, to Thursday next, half-past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS: TUESDAY, 6TH MARCH, 1906.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS (STANDING ORDER 63 COMPLIED WITH).—MR. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That in the case of the following Bill referred on the First Reading thereof, Standing Order No. 63 has been complied with viz. :—

Metropolitan Electric Supply Bill.

Ordered, that the Bill be read a second time 265

London Southern Tramways Bill.—Read a second time, and committed .. 265

Uxbridge Gas Bill.—Read a second time, and committed 265

Metropolitan District Railway Bill (by Order); Metropolitan Railway Bill (by Order).—Read a second time, and committed 265

Midland Railway Bill (by Order).—Second Reading deferred till to-morrow 265

North Metropolitan Tramways Bill (by Order).—Read a second time, and committed 265

STANDING ORDERS.

Resolutions reported from the Select Committee :—

1. "That, in the case of the London Outer Circle Railway Bill, Petition for dispensing with Standing Order 128 in the case of the Petition of the 'London and India Docks Company,' against the Bill, the said Standing Order ought to be dispensed with."

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2. "That, in the case of the Metropolitan Water Board Bill, Petition for dispensing with Standing Order 128 in the case of the Petition of the 'Marquess of Salisbury,' against the Bill, the said Standing Order ought to be dispensed with."

3. "That, in the case of the Romford and District Tramways, Petition for Bill, the Standing Orders ought to be dispensed with. That the parties be permitted to proceed with their Bill."

4. "That, in the case of the London United Tramways, Petition for Bill, the Standing Orders ought to be dispensed with. That the parties be permitted to proceed with their Bill, provided that the powers to construct the Tramways proposed to be authorised be struck out of the Bill. That the Committee on the Bill do report how far such Order has been complied with."

5. "That, in the case of the Heacham Water, Petition for Bill, the Standing Orders ought to be dispensed with. That the parties be permitted to proceed with their Bill."

Resolutions agreed to 265

PETITIONS.

Licensed Premises (Hours of Closing).—Petition from Hunslet, for alteration of law; to lie upon the Table 266

Unemployed Workmen Act, 1905.—Petition from Poplar, for alteration of law; to lie upon the Table 266

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1889.—Copy presented, of Report by the Chairman of Committees of the House of Lords and the Chairman of Ways and Means in the House of Commons, under The Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899, that they are of opinion that the Edinburgh Corporation, the Highland and Great North of Scotland Railways Amalgamation, and the Scottish Union and National Insurance Company Orders ought to be dealt with by Private Bill and not by Provisional Order, etc. [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 78.] .. 266

National Gallery, etc. (Scotland).—Copy presented, of Twelfth Annual Report to the Secretary for Scotland by the Commissioners and Trustees of the Board of Manufactures in Scotland, being for the year ending 30th September, 1905 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 266

Licensing Act, 1904.—Copy presented, of Treasury Minute, dated 28th February, 1906, directing that the "Compensation Fund (Licensing Act, 1904) Account" shall be audited by the Comptroller and Auditor-General [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 267

Bulgaria (New Customs Tariff) (Interim Statement).—Copy presented, of Translation of the New Customs Tariff of Bulgaria, as modified by Commercial Conventions with the United Kingdom, Germany, France, and Italy [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 267

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COAL EXPORTED.—Return ordered, " giving, for the year 1905, the export of coal from each port in the United Kingdom to each country abroad, together with summary statements showing the export of coal in every period of three months from the principal districts of the United Kingdom to the principal groups of foreign countries ; and also showing the quantity of coal shipped in each port in the United Kingdom for ships' use on foreign voyages during like periods (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 112, of Session 1905)."—(*Mr. D. A. Thomas.*) 267

REDISTRIBUTION OF SEATS.—Copy ordered, " of the Report and Supplementary Report made by the Committee appointed in August, 1905, to inquire and report upon certain questions connected with a proposed Redistribution of Seats at Parliamentary Elections."—(*Mr. D. A. Thomas.*) 267

PARLIAMENT (MEETING, ETC.).—Return ordered, " showing dates of meeting and prorogation of Parliament in each session from the year 1808, and the duration of the Sittings of the House."—(*Mr. D. A. Thomas.*) 267

COLONIES (COLONIAL ACTS, ROYAL ASSENT).—Address for " Return of the names of Bills, since the date covered by the House of Commons Return, No. 362, of 1901, passed by both Houses of the Legislature in Colonies possessing responsible government, to which His Majesty has not given His Assent, and of Bills so passed with a suspending Clause, under which the Act does not come into operation until proclaimed, in respect of which no such proclamation has been made."—(*Colonel Legge.*) 267

FOREIGN TRADE AND COMMERCE.—Return ordered, " of monthly accounts relating to the Trade and Commerce of certain Foreign Countries and British Possessions."—(*Mr. Lloyd-George*) 268

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

FREEBOARD OF BRITISH SHIPS.—Question, Mr. J. Havelock Wilson (Middlesbrough) ; Answer, Mr. Lloyd-George 268

VALUE OF IMPORTS FROM BRITISH POSSESSIONS—HOME COMPETITION.—Question, Lord Robert Cecil (Marylebone, E.) ; Answer, Mr. Lloyd-Geogre 269

PRICES OF AND IMPORT DUTY ON SUGAR.—Question, Mr. Toulmin (Bury) ; Answer, Mr. Lloyd-George 269

IMPORTATION OF COLONIAL AND FOREIGN STORE CATTLE—REPLIES TO DEPUTATIONS.—Question, Mr. Walrond (Devonshire, Tiverton) ; Answer, Sir Edward Strachey 269

ABOLITION OF CORPORAL PUNISHMENT IN MILITARY SCHOOLS.—Question, Mr. Tomkinson (Cheshire, Crewe) ; Answer, Mr. Haldane 269

TRANSFER OF COST OF DEFENCES OF NAVAL DOCKYARDS TO NAVY ESTIMATES. —Question, Mr. Bellairs (Lynn Regis) ; Answer, Mr. Haldane 270

TREATMENT OF BARBADOS AND TRINIDAD.—Question, Mr. O. C. Philipps (Pembroke and Haverfordwest) ; Answer, Mr. Churchill 270

PAY AND PENSIONS OF STAFF OF COLONIAL BRANCH.—Question, Mr. Field (Dublin, St. Patrick) ; Answer, Mr. McKenna 271

STAMP DUTY ON AFFIDAVITS AND MEMORIALS IN IRELAND.—Question, Mr. Vincent Kennedy (Cavan, W.); Answer, Mr. McKenna 273

VALUE OF BRITISH EXPORTS TO SOUTH AFRICA.—Question, Sir Howard Vincent (Sheffield, Central); Answer, Mr. Lloyd-George 273

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LICENSING STATISTICS.—Question, Mr. C. H. Roberts (Lincoln); Answer, Mr. Gladstone 274

HOUSE-TO-HOUSE HAWKING OF BEER.—Question, Mr. Hart Davies (Fulham); Answer, Mr. Gladstone 275

POST OFFICE WAGES COMMITTEE—POSITION OF OVERSEERS.—Question, Mr. Alden (Middlesex, Tottenham); Answer, Mr. Sydney Buxton 275

COLLECTION OF RATES IN ST. GEORGE'S IN THE EAST.—Question, Mr. W. Benn (Tower Hamlets, St. George's); Answer, Mr. John Burns 275

TUBERCULOSIS AND CATTLE DISEASE.—Question, Mr. Cairns (Newcastle-on-Tyne); Answer, Sir Edward Strachey 276

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IRISH FIRMS AND DRUG CONTRACTS FOR IRISH UNIONS.—Questions, Mr. Field; Answers, Mr. Bryce 278

PROSECUTION OF MRS. REGAN—ABSENCE FROM DUTY OF MR. MULLANE.—Question, Mr. Flynn (Cork, N.); Answer, Mr. Bryce 279

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ROYAL COMMISSION ON RECLAMATION OF FORESHORES, ETC.—PERSONNEL AND TERMS OF REFERENCE.—Question, Mr. J. F. Mason (Windsor); Answer, Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman 283

PROCEDURE—LIMITS OF DISCUSSION.—Question, Mr. Ashton (Bedfordshire, Luton); Answer, Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman 283

CANALS COMMISSION—SUGGESTED REPRESENTATIVE OF THE THAMES CONSERVANCY.—Question, Mr. Barnard (Kidderminster); Answer, Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman 284

CANAL COMMISSION—AGRICULTURAL REPRESENTATIVES. — Question, Mr. Courthorpe (Sussex, Rye); Answer, Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman 284

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ROYAL YACHT—OFFICERS' PROMOTIONS.—Question, Mr. Bellairs (Lynn Regis); Answer, The Secretary to the Admiralty (Mr. Edmund Robertson, Dundee) 284

ADMIRALTY ORDERS FOR THE THAMES.—Question, Mr. Carlile (Hertfordshire, St. Albans); Answer, Mr. Edmund Robertson 285

NAVAL DRAUGHTSMEN.—Question, Mr. Carlile; Answer, Mr. Edmund Robertson 285

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CHINESE COOLIES' LICENCES FOR THE WITWATERSRAND.—Question, Mr. Walsh (Lancashire, Ince); Answer, Mr. Churchill 287

BRITISH INDIAN SUBJECTS IN SOUTH AFRICA.—Question, Mr. Claude Hay (Shoreditch, Hoxton); Answer, Mr. Churchill 288

TRANSVAAL GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS.—Question, Mr. Claude Hay; Answer, Mr. Churchill 288

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Ecclesiastical Disorders Bill.—Order for Second Reading upon Friday, 4th May, read, and discharged. Bill withdrawn 319

SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES).

Sir W. BRAMPTON GURDON reported from the Committee of Selection; That they had nominated the following Members to serve on the Standing Committee for the consideration of all Bills relating to Trade (including Agriculture and Fishing), Shipping and Manufacturers, which may, by Order of the House, be committed to such Standing Committee:—Mr. Attorney-General, Mr. Baldwin, Mr. J. A. Bright, Mr. Cawley, Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. Channing, Mr. Cheetham, Mr. Jesse Collings, Mr. Courthope, Mr. Cremer, Mr. Crombie, Mr. Alexander Cross, Mr. Cullinan, Mr. David Davies, Mr. Vaughan-Davies, Mr. Timothy Davies, Sir Frederick Dixon-Hartland, Mr. Doogan, Mr. Duckworth, Mr. C. Duncan, Mr. Frank Edwards, Mr. Everett, Mr. Ferens, Sir Henry Fowler, Mr. Gill, Sir W. Evans-Gordon, Colonel Harrison-Broadley, Mr. Hayden, Mr. Higham, Sir William Holland, Mr. Idris, Mr. John Johnson, Mr. Kearley, Mr. Lloyd-George, Colonel Long, Mr. McKillop, Mr. Mansfield, Mr. Meehan, Mr. T. P. O'Connor, Mr. O'Mara, Mr. Parkes, Mr. Pike Pease, Mr. Thomas Richards, Mr. Runciman, Mr. T. W. Russell, Mr. Herbert Samuel, Mr. Shackleton, Mr. Soames, Sir Edward Strachey, Mr. James Stuart, Mr. John Talbot, Mr. Austin Taylor, Mr. Theodore Taylor, Mr. H. J. Tennant, Mr. D. A. Thomas, Mr. Verney, Mr. Wadsworth, Mr. Walrond, Mr. Walsh, Mr. Cathcart Wason, Mr. George White, Mr. Osmond Williams, Colonel Williams, Lord Willoughby de Eresby, Mr. John Wilson, Mr. Wolff, and Mr. Samuel Young.

Sir W. Brampton Gurdon further reported from the Committee; That they had nominated the following Members to serve on the Standing Committee for the consideration of all Bills relating to Law, and Courts of Justice, and Legal Procedure, which may, by Order of the House, be committed to such Standing Committee:—The Lord Advocate, Mr. Arkwright, Mr. Atherley-Jones, Mr. Harmood-Banner, Mr. Barran, Mr. Billson, Mr. Boland, Mr. Brace, Mr. John Burns, Sir Edward Carson, Mr. Cave, Sir Edward Clarke, Mr. Cobbold, Mr. Curtis Craig, Mr. Dickinson Sir Charles Dilke, Mr. Akers-Douglas, Mr. Clement Edwards, Mr. Enoch Edwards, Mr. Samuel Evans, Mr. George Faber (York), Sir George Fardell, Mr. Flynn, Mr. Secretary Gladstone, Mr. Ellis Griffith, Mr. Harwood, Sir James Haslam, Mr. T. M. Healy, Mr. Arthur Henderson, Mr. J. M. Henderson, Colonel Ivor Herbert, Mr. Charles Hobhouse, Mr. Hodge, Sir J. Jardine, Sir Joseph Leese, Colonel Legge, Mr. R. C. Lehmann, Sir Francis Lowe, Mr. J. R. Macdonald, Dr. Macnamara, Mr. Swift MacNeill, Mr. Maddison, Mr. Massie, Mr. Middlemore, Mr. Lloyd-Morgan, Mr. Nannetti, Mr. Nussey; Mr. Pickersgill, Sir Francis Powell, Mr. Rainy, Mr. Rawlinson, Mr. Reckitt, Mr. Remnant, Mr. Compton Rickett, Mr. Bryn Roberts, Mr. S. Roberts, Mr. Soares, Mr. Solicitor-General, Mr. Solicitor-General for Scotland, Sir Benjamin Stone, Mr. J. W. Taylor, Mr. Thornton, Sir Howard Vincent, Mr. Waldron, Mr. Wallace, Mr. Joseph Walton, Mr. Whitehead, and Mr. W. L. Williams.

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(Selection Standing Committees) (Chairmen's Panel).

Sir W. Brampton Gurdon reported from the Committee of Selection; That they have selected the following six Members to be the Chairmen's Panel and to serve as Chairmen of the two Standing Committees to be appointed under Standing Order No. 49:—Sir Thomas Esmonde, Mr. Laurence Hardy, Mr. Stuart-Wortley, Sir James Woodhouse, Mr. Brynmor Jones, and Mr. Eugene Wason.

Report to lie upon the Table. 321

Selection (Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899) (Commissioners).

Sir W. Brampton Gurdon reported from the Committee of Selection; That in pursuance of the provisions of The Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899, they had selected the following fifteen Members to form the Parliamentary Panel of Members of this House to act as Commissioners:—Mr. Alexander Black, Mr. McCrae, Sir J. Tuke, Mr. Levy, Mr. Weir, Mr. Findlay, Mr. Younger, Mr. Lamont, Mr. Ainsworth, Mr. John Dewar, Mr. J. D. Hope, Mr. Wilkie, Mr. R. Bell, Major Anstruther-Gray, and Mr. Ernest Gardner.

Report to lie upon the Table 321

NEW BILLS.

Representation of the People Bill.—"To amend the Law relating to the Registration of Voters, removing certain restrictions appertaining to the qualification of occupation and lodger voters at Parliamentary and occupation voters at Municipal Elections, and shortening the qualifying period required

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for all such voters from twelve months to three months," presented by Mr. Edward Dunn; supported by Mr. Rowlands, Mr. Nicholls, and Mr. Athelstan Rendal; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 69] 322

Spurious Sports Bill.—"To prohibit the hunting, coursing, and shooting of animals, kept in confinement," presented by Mr. Luttrell, supported by Mr. Corrie Grant, Mr. Shipman, Mr. G. Greenwood, and Mr. Ramsay Macdonald; to be read a second time upon Wednesday, 14th March, and to be printed. [Bill 70] 322

Justices of the Peace Bill.—"To amend the Law in regard to the qualification of Justices of the Peace and to make changes in respect to recommendations to the Lord Chancellor, presented by Mr. Luttrell; supported by Mr. Charles Hobhouse and Mr. Robert Price; to be read a second time upon Wednesday, 21st March, and to be printed. [Bill 71] 322

Places of Worship Enfranchisement Bill.—"To provide for the Enfranchisement of leasehold Places of Worship," presented by Mr. Samuel Evans; supported by Mr. Bryn Roberts, Mr. Perks, Mr. Brynmor Jones, and Mr. Illingworth; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 72] 322

Post Office (Money Orders) Bill.—"To extend certain provisions of the Post Office (Money Orders) Acts to Money Orders transmitted to and from Foreign States and British Protectorates," presented by Mr. Sydney Buxton; to be read a second time upon Thursday, and to be printed. [Bill 73] 323

Crofters' Holdings (Scotland) Acts Amendment Bill.—"To amend the Crofters' Holdings (Scotland) Acts," presented by Mr. Weir; supported by Mr. Morton, Mr. John Dewar, Mr. Cathcart Wason, and Mr. Dalziel; to be read a second time upon Friday, and to be printed. [Bill 74] 323

POST OFFICE SERVANTS.—Motion made and Question proposed, "That a Select Committee of seven members, to be nominated by the Committee of Selection, be appointed to inquire into the wages and position of the principal classes of Post Office servants (other than the supervising and clerical force, and those in the engineering, stores, and factories departments), and also of the unestablished sub-postmasters. To examine, so far as may be necessary for the purpose of their Report, the conditions of employment of these classes. To report whether, having regard to the conditions and prospects of their employment, and, as far as may be, to the standard rate of wages and the position of other classes of workers, the remuneration they receive is adequate or otherwise."—(*Mr. Sydney Buxton.*)

Sir A. Acland-Hood (*Somersetshire, Wellington*) 323

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the debate be now adjourned." —(*Sir Alexander Acland-Hood.*)

The Postmaster-General (*Mr. Sydney Buxton, Tower Hamlets, Poplar*) .. 327
Mr. Austen Chamberlain (*Worcestershire, E.*) 329
The Prime Minister and First Lord of the Treasury (*Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman, Stirling Burghs*) 332
Mr. T. P. O'Connor (*Liverpool, Scotland*) 335
Mr. Henniker Heaton (*Canterbury*) 335
Sir Francis Lowe (*Birmingham, Edgbaston*) 336
Sir Edward Clarke (*City of London*) 337

Question put.

The House divided :—Ayes, 107 ; Noes, 311. (Division List No. 4.)

Sir Francis Lowe 341
Sir W. Evans Gordon (*Tower Hamlets, Stepney*) 342

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out the word 'seven' in line 1 in order to insert the word 'five.'"—(*Sir Francis Lowe.*)

Question proposed, "That the word proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

Mr. Sydney Buxton 343
Lord Balcarres (*Lancashire, Chorley*) 344
The Parliamentary Secretary to the Treasury (*Mr. George Whiteley, Yorkshire, W.R., Pudsey*) 346
Lord Willoughby de Eresby (*Lincolnshire, Horncastle*) 347
Sir Edward Carson (*Dublin University*) 347
Mr. Austen Chamberlain 349
Mr. Shackleton (*Lancashire, Clitheroe*) 351
Mr. William Rutherford (*Liverpool, West Derby*) 352
Mr. Samuel Roberts (*Sheffield, Ecclesall*) 352
Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman 353

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Original Question again proposed.

Amendments proposed and agreed to—

"In line 1, to leave out the word 'seven,' and insert the word 'nine'"; and

"In line 2, to leave out the words 'to be nominated by the Committee of Selection.'"—(*Mr. Sydney Buxton.*)

Original Question, as amended, again proposed.

Mr. William Rutherford 354

Amendment proposed—

"In line 4, to leave out the words 'other than the supervising and clerical force, and those in the engineering, stores and factories departments.'"—(*Mr. William Rutherford.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

Mr. Sydney Buxton 355
Sir Edward Carson 355
Sir Francis Lowe 356
Sir Howard Vincent (*Sheffield, Central*) 357

Question, " That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question," put, and negatived.

Main Question, as amended, put, and agreed to.

Ordered, That a Select Committee of nine Members be appointed to inquire into the wages and position of the principal classes of Post Office servants, and also of the unestablished sub-postmasters.

To examine, so far as may be necessary for the purpose of their Report, the conditions of employment of these classes.

To report whether, having regard to the conditions and prospects of their employment, and, as far as may be, to the standard rate of wages and the position of other classes of workers, the remuneration they receive is adequate or otherwise.

Ordered, That the Committee have power to send for persons, papers and records.—(*Mr. Sydney Buxton.*)

Motion made, and Question proposed, " That three be the quorum."—(*Mr. Sydney Buxton.*)

Amendment proposed—

" To leave out the word ' Three,' and insert the word ' Five.' "—(*Sir Francis Lowe.*)

Question proposed, " That the word ' Three ' stand part of the Question."

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Amendment proposed, and agreed to—

" To leave out the word ' Three ' and insert the word ' Four.' "—(*Mr. Sydney Buxton.*)

Main Question, as amended, put, and agreed to.

Ordered, That four be the quorum.

Notice of Accidents Bill.—Order for Second Reading read.

The Under-Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Herbert Samuel, Yorkshire, Cleveland) 358

Motion made and Question proposed, " That this Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Herbert Samuel*).

Mr. Cochrane (Ayrshire, N.) 364
Mr. Myer (Lambeth, N.) 367
Mr. Glover (St. Helens) 367
Mr. H. J. Tennant (Berwickshire) 369
Mr. Stuart Wortley (Sheffield, Hallam) 370
Mr. Gill (Bolton) 371
Mr. J. Ward (Stoke-on-Trent) 372
Mr. Havelock Wilson (Middlesbrough) 373

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Mr. Samuel Evans (Glamorganshire, Mid.) 374
Mr. Carlile (Hertfordshire, St. Albans) 376
Mr. Bell (Derby) 377
The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Gladstone, Leeds, W.) 378
Lord R. Cecil (Marylebone, E.) 379
Mr. Morton (Sutherland) 379

Question put.

Bill read a second time, and committed to the Standing Committee on Trade, etc.

Police (Superannuation) Bill.—Order for Second Reading read.

The Under-Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Herbert Samuel, Yorks, Cleveland) 379

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Sir Howard Vincent (Sheffield, Central) 383
Mr. Pickersgill (Bethnal Green, S.W.) 385
Mr. Cave (Surrey, Kingston) 386
Mr. W. H. Davies (Bristol, S.) 387
Mr. William Rutherford 387

And, it being half-past Seven of the Clock, the debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed to-morrow.

EVENING SITTING.

PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS. RETURNING OFFICERS' CHARGES.

Mr. Rowlands (Kent, Dartford) 388
Mr. Fenwick (Northumberland, Wansbeck) 396

Motion proposed, "That in the opinion of this House, the returning officers' expenses, and all other official charges in connection with Parliamentary elections, should be defrayed out of public funds, and that a material reduction is possible in the present scale of charges allowed under the Parliamentary Elections (Returning Officers) Expenses Act, 1875."—(*Mr. Rowlands.*)

Mr. William Rutherford (Liverpool, West Derby) 398
Mr. William Redmond (Clare, E.) 400
Mr. Stuart (Sunderland) 401
Mr. Claude Hay (Shoreditch, Hoxton) 402
Mr. Akers-Douglas (Kent, St. Augustine's) 403
The Attorney-General (Sir John Walton, Leeds, S.) 405
Sir Carne Rasch (Essex, Chelmsford) .. ..

Question put and agreed to.

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Resolved, That, in the opinion of this House, the Returning Officers' Expenses, and all other official charges in connection with Parliamentary Elections, should be defrayed out of public funds, and that a material reduction is possible in the present scale of charges allowed under the Parliamentary Elections (Returning Officers) Expenses Act, 1875.—(*Mr. Rowlands.*)

THE CHARITY COMMISSION.

Sir Walter Foster (*Derbyshire, Ilkeston*) 408
Mr. Goddard (*Ipswich*) 411

Motion proposed, "That in the opinion of this House, schemes of the Charity Commissioners for the reform, new constitution, or amendment of trust deeds of charities, other than ecclesiastical charities, should in all cases provide for the removal of disabilities of trustees in respect of their religious opinions, and for the election of a majority of the trustees by representative authorities."—(*Sir Walter Foster.*)

Mr. Rawlinson (*Cambridge University*) 412
Mr. Rainy (*Kilmarnock Burghs*) 414
Sir Francis Powell (*Wigan*) 416
Mr. Trevelyan (*Yorkshire, W.R., Elland*) 418
Colonel Legge (*St. George's, Hanover Square*) 421
Sir Edward Clarke (*City of London*) 421
Mr. Bridgeman (*Shropshire, Oswestry*) 423

And, it being Midnight, the debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed to-morrow.

FOREIGN COUNTRIES (PAYMENT OF MEMBERS).—Address for "Return showing, with respect to the United States of America and the countries of Europe, whether payment of Members of the Legislature obtains; the amounts or scale of such payment; and whether it includes, or whether there is in addition thereto, any allowance for travelling expenses or the privilege of free passes on the railways of those countries."—(*Mr. John Ward.*) 424

REDISTRIBUTION OF SEATS.—Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 6th March; *Mr. D. A. Thomas*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 79.] 424

PARLIAMENT (MEETING &c.).—Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 6th March; *Mr. D. A. Thomas*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 80.] 424

Adjourned at two minutes after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS: WEDNESDAY, 7TH MARCH. 1906.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Baker Street and Waterloo Railway Bill.—Gas Companies (Removal of Sulphur Restrictions) Bill.—Read a second time, and committed.

Midland Railway Bill (BY ORDER).—Second Reading deferred till Tuesday, 20th March (Evening Sitting).

Metropolitan Police Provisional Order Bill (BY ORDER).—Read a second time, and committed 425

PRIVATE LEGISLATION PROCEDURE (SCOTLAND) ACT, 1892.

The CHAIRMAN of WAYS and MEANS reported, That, after conferring with the Chairman of Committees of the House of Lords, for the purpose of determining in which House of Parliament the respective Bills, under The Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899, should be first considered, they had determined that the following Bills should originate in the House of Lords, viz.:—1. Highland and Great North of Scotland Railways Amalgamation. 2. Scottish Union and National Insurance Company.

Report to lie upon the Table 425

PETITIONS.

LAND VALUES (ASSESSMENT AND RATING) BILL.—Petition from Croydon, in favour; to lie upon the Table 425

PUBLIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS (RELIGIOUS TEACHING).—Two Petitions from Stanton Fitzwarren, against alteration of Law; to lie upon the Table .. 425

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

ROYAL UNIVERSITY OF IRELAND.—Copy presented, of Twenty-fourth Report of the Royal University of Ireland, being for the year 1905 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 425

FOREIGN TRADE AND COMMERCE.—Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 6th March; *Mr. Lloyd-George*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 81.] 426

SHOP HOURS ACT, 1904.—Copy presented, of Order made by the Council of the County Borough of Gateshead, and confirmed by the Secretary of State for the Home Department, fixing the Hours of Closing for certain Shops within the Borough [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 426

AUSTRALIA.—Copy presented, of Address from the House of Representatives and Resolution of the Senate on the subject of Home Rule for Ireland, and the Replies thereto [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 426

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Programme of Work for Pembroke Dockyard.—Question, Mr. Owen Philipps (Pembroke and Haverfordwest); Answer, Mr. Edmund Robertson .. 427

Discharges from Sheerness Dockyard.—Question, Mr. Napier (Kent, Faversham); Answer, Mr. Edmund Robertson 427

Ireland and the Royal Commission on Canals.—Question, Mr. O'Shee (Waterford, W.); Answer, Mr. Bryce 427

Working of Labourers Acts in Ireland.—Question, Mr. O'Shee; Answer, Mr. Bryce 428

Importation of Irish Pigs into England.—Question, Mr. J. P. Farrell; Answer, Mr. Bryce 429

Date of next Meeting of Land Sub-Commission at Ballymahon.—Question, Mr. J. P. Farrell; Answer, Mr. Bryce 429

Fair Rents on the Earl of Annesley Estate.—.—Question, Mr. MacVeagh (Down, S.); Answer, Mr. Bryce 429

Erection of Labourers' Cottages in Ireland—Legal Costs.—Question, Mr. Liddell (Down, W.); Answer, Mr. Bryce 430

Fair Rent Appeals at Letterkenny—Delay in Delivery of Judgment.—Question, Mr. McVeagh (Donegal, E.); Answer, Mr. Bryce 430

Purchase of Holdings on the Warburton Estate.—Question, Mr. Delany (Queen's County, Ossory); Answer, Mr. Bryce 431

Sale of Estate of late J. Dunn at Aughaboe, Queen's County.—Question, Mr. Delany; Answer, Mr. Bryce 431

Rates of Mortality among Natives Employed in Transvaal Mines.—Question, Mr. Hills (Durham); Answer, Mr. Churchill 432

Death Rates Amongst Chinese, White Labourers and Natives in African Mines.—Question, Mr. Hills; Answer, Mr. Churchill 432

Upkeep of Colonial Audit Branch.—Question, Mr. Field (Dublin, St Patrick); Answer, Mr. McKenna 432

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Suggested Government Supervision of British Insurance Companies.—Question, Mr. Field; Answer, Mr. Lloyd-George 433

French Import Duty on Umbrella Fittings.—Question, Mr. Samuel Roberts, (Sheffield, Eccleshall); Answer, Mr. Lloyd-George 434

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MILITIA TRAINING.—Question, Colonel Kenyon-Slaney (Shropshire, Newport); Answer, The Secretary of State for War (Mr. Haldane, Haddington) 439

ARMY OFFICERS' PAY.—Question, Mr. Verney (Buckinghamshire, N.); Answer, Mr. Haldane 439

SEAMEN'S AND SOLDIERS' FALSE CHARACTERS BILL.—Question, Colonel Legge (St. George's, Hanover Square); Answer, Mr. Haldane 440

ST. GEORGE'S BARRACKS RECRUITING ESTABLISHMENT.—Question, Colonel Legge; Answer, Mr. Haldane 440

CAVALRY BARRACKS.—Question, Mr. Rose (Cambridgeshire, Newmarket); Answer, Mr. Haldane 440

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Native Disturbances in Natal.—Question, Sir Gilbert Parker (Gravesend); Mr. Churchill 443

Suggested Standing Committee for India.—Question, Dr. Rutherford (Middlesex, Brentford); Answer, The Secretary of State for India (Mr. Morley, Montrose Burghs) 443

Police and the Public in Eastern Bengal.—Question, Mr. C. J. O'Donnell (Newington, Walworth); Answer, Mr. Morley 443

Inspection of Telegrams.—Question, Mr. Vincent Kennedy (Cavan, W.); Answer, The Postmaster-General (Mr. Sydney Buxton, Tower Hamlets, Poplar) 444

Hours of Labour of Signalmen and Shunters.—Question, Mr. Bell (Derby); Answer, The Secretary to the Board of Trade (Mr. Kearley, Devonport) .. 444

Goole Railway Fatality.—Question, Mr. Bell; Answer, Mr. Kearley 445

German Tariffs on Bread Stuffs.—Question, Mr. Rendall (Gloucestershire, Thornbury); Answer, Mr. Kearley 445

Shirley Village Community for Poor Law Children.—Question, Mr. Maclean (Bath); Answer, The Secretary to the Local Government Board (Mr. Runciman, Dewsbury) 446

Inland Revenue—Supervision Promotion.—Question, Mr. Meechan (Queen's County, Leix); Answer, The Financial Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. McKenna, Monmouthshire, N.) 447

Stratford District Inland Revenue Supervisors' Promotion.—Question, Mr. Meechan; Answer, Mr. McKenna 447

National Pension List.—Questions, Mr. Bottomley (Hackney, S.), and Mr. Keir Hardie (Merthyr Tydvil); Answer, Mr. McKenna 448

Leadless Glaze Ware for Government Departments.—Question, Sir Charles Dilke (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean); Answer, The First Commissioner of Works (Mr. Harcourt, Lancashire, Rossendale) 449

Education (Provision of Meals) Bill.—Question, Dr. Macnamara (Camberwell N.); Answer, The President of the Board of Education (Mr. Birrell, Bristol, N.) 450

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Scottish Education—Equivalent Grants for Technical Instruction.—Mr. Crombie (Kincardineshire); Answer, Mr. Sinclair 451

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IRISH TENANTS AT WILL.—Question, Mr. Ginnell; Answer, The Attorney-General for Ireland (Mr. Cherry, Liverpool, Exchange) 452

IRISH TENANTS' IMPROVEMENTS.—Question, Mr. Ginnell; Answer, Mr. Cherry 453

CHALLENGING OF IRISH JURORS.—Question, Mr. Lonsdale (Armagh, Mid); Answer, Mr. Cherry 453

IRISH LAND PURCHASE—MINERAL RIGHTS.—Question, Mr. Sheehy (Meath, S.); Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. Bryce Aberdeen, S.) 454

LAND PRICES AND RENT REDUCTIONS.—Questions, Mr. Murphy (Kerry, E.) and Mr. Kilbride (Kildare, S.); Answers, Mr. Bryce 454

IRISH OUTDOOR RELIEF REGULATIONS.—Question, Mr. Joseph Devlin (Belfast W.); Answer Mr. Bryce 455

CANDCLEAR ESTATE, COUNTY GALWAY.—Question, Mr. Duffy (Galway, S.): Answer, Mr. Bryce 455

GOVERNMENT UNTENANTED LANDS.—Question, Mr. Duffy; Answer, Mr. Bryce 456

ADMINISTRATION OF THE IRISH LAND ACT.—Question, Mr. Ginnell (Westmeath, N.); Answer, Mr. Bryce 456

UNTENANTED LAND RETURN.—Question, Mr. Ginnell; Answer, Mr. Bryce .. 457

BLOOMHILL DERRYCARNEY ROAD, BIRR.—Question, Mr. Reddy (King's County, Birr); Answer, Mr. Bryce 457

CONSTABLE ANDERSON—ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY.—Questions, Mr. Swift MacNeill (Donegal, S.), Mr. Sloan (Belfast, S.), and Mr. T. L. Corbett (Down, S.); Answers, Mr. Bryce 458

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IRISH EDUCATION GRANTS.—Question, Mr. Flynn (Cork, N.); Answer, Mr. McKenna 460

IRISH QUIT RENTS.—Question, Mr. O'Mara (Kilkenny, S.); Answer, Mr. McKenna 461

ST. PATRICK'S DAY OBSERVANCE IN IRELAND.—Questions, Mr. MacVeagh (Down, S.) and Mr. Charles Craig (Antrim, S.); Answers, Mr. Sydney Buxton 461

CALEDON (TYRONE) MAIL SERVICE.—Question, Mr. Lonsdale; Answer, Mr. Sydney Buxton 462

LOCAL EXPENDITURE—SUGGESTED GOVERNMENT STATEMENT ON BUDGET DAY.—Question, Mr. Bowles; Answer, The Prime Minister and First Lord of the Treasury (Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman, Stirling Burghs) 462

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Suggested Municipalisation of Canals.—Question, Mr. Clement Edwards (Denbigh Districts); Answer, Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman 463

Business of the House.—Question, Mr. Akers-Douglas (Kent, St. Augustine's); Answer, Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman 463

NEW BILLS.

Licensed Premises (Ireland) (St. Patrick's Day) Bill.—"To enforce the closing of Licensed Premises on St. Patrick's Day in Ireland," presented by Mr. O'Mara; supported by Sir Thomas Esmonde, Mr. William Redmond, Mr. Joyce, and Mr. Thomas O'Donnell; to be read a second time to-morrow, and to be printed. [Bill 75.] 464

Juvenile Smoking Bill.—"To provide for the prevention of Juvenile Smoking," presented by Dr. Macnamara; supported by Mr. Crooks, Major Seely, Dr. Shipman, Sir John Tuke, Mr. Cathcart Wason, Mr. George White, Mr. Shackleton, Mr. Alden, Mr. Henderson, and Mr. Lea; to be read a second time upon Thursday, 15th March, and to be printed. [Bill 76.] 464

Cruelty to Animals Bill.—"To amend The Cruelty to Animals Act, 1876," presented by Mr. George Greenwood; supported by Colonel Lockwood, Mr. MacNeill, Mr. Channing, Mr. Crooks, Mr. Tomkinson, Mr. Maddison, and Mr. Lehmann; to be read a second time upon Friday, 16th March, and to be printed. [Bill 77.] 464

Dogs Bill.—"To consolidate and amend the enactments relating to injury to live stock by Dogs, and otherwise to amend the Law relating to Dogs," presented by Sir Edward Strachey; supported by Mr. Solicitor-General; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 78.] .. 464

Fertilisers and Feeding Stuffs Bill.—"To amend the Law with respect to the sale of Agricultural Fertilisers and Feeding Stuffs," presented by Sir Edward Strachey; supported by Mr. Solicitor-General; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 79.] 464

Open Spaces Bill.—"To consolidate enactments relating to Open Spaces," presented by Sir Edward Strachey; supported by Mr. Solicitor-General; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 80.] 464

Supply.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. Emmott (Oldham) in the Chair.]

Navy (Supplementary) Estimates, 1905–6.

1. Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £100, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1906, for additional Expenditure on the following Navy Services, viz.:—

Vote 8. Shipbuilding, Repairs, Maintenance, &c. :—

	£
Section II. Matériel	100,000
Section III. Contract Work	100
Vote 10. Works, Buildings, and Repairs, &c.	100
Vote 11. Miscellaneous Effective Services	61,000
	161,200
Less Surpluses on other Votes	161,100
	£100 ”

The Secretary to the Admiralty (*Mr. Edmund Robertson, Dundee*) .. 465
Mr. Austen Chamberlain (*Worcestershire, E.*) 466
The Financial Secretary to the Treasury (*Mr. McKenna, Monmouthshire, N.*) 470
Sir Charles Dilke (*Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean*) 471
Mr. Austin Taylor (*Liverpool, East Toxteth*) 473
Mr. J. Williams Benn (*Devonport*) 473
Mr. Morton (*Sutherland*) 474

Motion made, and Question proposed, “That a sum, not exceeding £50 be granted for the said Service.”—(*Mr. Morton.*)

Captain Hervey (*Bury, St. Edmunds*) 475
Mr. Edmund Robertson (*Dundee*) 476
Mr. Arthur Lee (*Hampshire, Fareham*) 478
Mr. O. C. Philipps (*Pembroke and Haverfordwest*) 478
Mr. Napier (*Kent, Faversham*) 479
Mr. Maddison (*Burnley*) 480
Mr. Morton 481

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

Original Question again proposed.

Question put, and agreed to.

Navy Estimates, 1906–7.

Motion made, and Question proposed, “That a sum, not exceeding £1,954,500 be granted to His Majesty, to defray the Expense of Works, Buildings, and Repairs, at Home and Abroad, including the cost of Superintendence, Purchase of Sites, Grants in Aid, and other Charges connected therewith, which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1907.”

The Civil Lord of the Admiralty (*Mr. Lambert, Devonshire, South Molton*) 482
Mr. Arthur Lee (*Hampshire, Fareham*) 485
Mr. Bellairs (*Lynn Regis*) 488
Mr. Arnold-Forster (*Croydon*) 490
Mr. J. Ward (*Stoke-on-Trent*) 492
Mr. Cremer (*Shoreditch, Haggerston*) 494
Dr. Ambrose (*Mayo, W.*) 496

Whereupon Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £1,954,400, be granted for the said Service."—(*Dr. Ambrose.*)

Mr. Soares (Devonshire, Barnstaple) 497
Major Seely (Liverpool, Abercromby) 497
Mr. Arthur Lee (Hampshire, Fareham) 498
Mr. Maddison (Burnley) 499
Mr. Arnold-Forster (Croydon) 501
Mr. Wedgwood (Newcastle-under-Lyme) 502
Captain Hervey 503
Mr. Lambert 504
Mr. Charles Devlin (Galway) 509
Mr. William Redmond (Clare, E.) 510
Mr. John O'Connor (Kildare, N.) 512

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

Original Question put, and agreed to.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £275,500, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the Expense of Medical Services, including the cost of Medical Establishments at Home and Abroad, which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1907."

The Secretary to the Admiralty (Mr. Edmund Robertson, Dundee) .. 514

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

3. £820,700, Half-Pay, Reserved, and Retired Pay.

4. £1,256,300, Naval and Marine Pensions, Gratuities, and Compassionate Allowances.

5. £383,700, Civil Pensions and Gratuities.

Resolutions to be reported upon Monday next; Committee to sit again to-morrow.

SUPPLY [1st MARCH] REPORT.

Resolutions reported.

NAVY ESTIMATES, 1906–7.

1. "That 129,000 officers, seamen and boys be employed for the Sea and Coast Guard Services for the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1907, including 19,466 Royal Marines."

2. "That a sum, not exceeding £6,810,700, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the Expenses of Wages, etc., to officers, seamen and boys, Coast Guard, and Royal Marines, which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1907."

Resolutions read a second time.

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Motion made, and Question proposed, " That this House doth agree with the Committee in the First Resolution."

Mr. Chiozza Money (*Paddington, N.*) 516
Mr. Byles (*Salford, N.*) 520
Mr. Edmund Robertson 520
Mr. Byles 521
Mr. Verney (*Buckinghamshire, N.*) 521

And, it being Half-past Seven of the Clock, the debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed To-morrow.

Subsequent Resolution to be further considered To-morrow.

EVENING SITTING.

PAYMENT OF MEMBERS.

Mr. W. H. Lever (*Cheshire, Wirral*) 522

Mr. Vivian (*Birkenhead*) 526

Motion made, and Question proposed, " That, in the opinion of this House, the time has now arrived when it is urgently required, in order to give to every constituency an equal, free, and unhampered selection of Parliamentary representatives, that all Members of Parliament should be paid by the State a sum at the rate of £300 per annum."—(*Mr. W. H. Lever.*)

Sir Henry Kimber (*Wandsworth*) 532
Mr. Evelyn Cecil (*Aston Manor*) 537

Amendment proposed—

" In line 1, to leave out from the word 'That' to the end of the Question, and add the words 'it is not competent or desirable for this House of its own Motion, and being the custodian and protector of the public purse, and acting therein in a fiduciary capacity to the taxpayers of this country, to vote for and to pay or appropriate to its own Members out of that purse any money for their own personal use and benefit."—(*Sir Henry Kimber.*)

Question proposed, " That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Resolution."

Mr. Atherley Jones (*Durham, N.W.*) 539
Mr. J. Ward (*Stoke-on-Trent*) 542
Sir Edward Clarke (*City of London*) 546
The Prime Minister and First Lord of the Treasury (*Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman, Stirling Burghs*) 550
Mr. John Redmond (*Waterford*) 556

Question put.

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The House divided :—Ayes, 363 ; Noes, 110. (Division List No. 5.)

Main Question put.

The House divided :—Ayes, 348 ; Noes, 110. (Division List No. 6.)

Resolved, " That, in the opinion of this House, the time has now arrived when it is urgently required, in order to give to every constituency an equal, free, and unhampered selection of Parliamentary representatives, that all Members of Parliament should be paid by the State a sum at the rate of £300 per annum.—(*Mr. William Lever.*)

Local Government (Scotland) (No. 2) Bill.—Read a Second time, and committed for Monday next 565

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE.—Ordered, That Mr. Snowden be discharged from the Public Accounts Committee.

Ordered, That Mr. Barnes be added to the Committee (*Mr. George Whiteley*) 565

POLITICAL REFUGEES.—On the Motion that the House do now adjourn.

Sir Wilfrid Lawson (*Cumberland, Cockermouth*) 565
The Secretary of State for the Home Department (*Mr. Gladstone, Leeds, W.*) 566
Mr. Leif Jones (*Westmoreland, Appleby*) 567
Mr. J. R. Macdonald (*Leicester*) 568
Mr. Gladstone 568

The House adjourned at One o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS : THURSDAY, 8TH MARCH, 1906.

Several Lords took the Oath.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

The LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House that the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the Certificate from the Examiners that the Standing Orders applicable to the following Bill have not been complied with : West Yorkshire Tramways.

And also the Certificates that the further Standing Orders applicable to the following Bills have been complied with : Buenos Ayres Grand National Tramways [H.L.] ; Central Northern (Ireland) and Midland Railways [H.L.] ; Portsmouth Water [H.L.] ; Kent Electric Power [H.L.] ; Truro Gas [H.L.] ; Shropshire, Worcestershire, and Staffordshire Electric Power [H.L.] ; Cambrian Railways [H.L.] ; Barry Railway [H.L.].

The same were ordered to lie on the Table 569

Antofagasta (Chili) and Bolivia Railway Bill [H.L.].—Read 2^a, and committed 569

Bridgewater Canals Bill [H.L.].—Read 2^a, and committed ; the Committee to be proposed by the Committee of Selection 569

Crystal Palace Company Bill [H.L.].—Read 2^a, and committed 569

Essex and Suffolk Equitable Insurance Society Bill [H.L.].—Great Central and Lancashire, Derbyshire, and East Coast Railways Bill [H.L.]; Great Northern Railway (Ireland) Bill [H.L.]; Holyhead Water Bill [H.L.]. Read 2^a, and committed; the Committees to be proposed by the Committee of Selection 569

H. R. Baines & Company Bill [H.L.].—Hull and Barnsley and Great Central Railway Companies Bill [H.L.]. Read 2^a, and committed 569

Hull and Barnsley Railway (Steam Vessels) Bill [H.L.].—Read 2^a, and committed; the Committee to be proposed by the Committee of Selection 569

Hull Joint Dock Bill [H.L.].—Kidderminster Gas Bill [H.L.]. Read 2^a, and committed 570

London and North Western Railway Bill [H.L.].—Manchester and Milford Railway Bill [H.L.]; Maryport Harbour Bill [H.L.]; Mersey Railway Bill [H.L.]. Read 2^a, and committed; the Committees to be proposed by the Committee of Selection 570

Milford Docks Bill [H.L.].—Mirfield Gas Bill [H.L.]; National Assurance Company of Ireland and Yorkshire Fire and Life Insurance Company Bill [H.L.] Read 2^a, and committed 570

Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire Tramways Bill [H.L.].—Sheffield Assay Office Bill [H.L.]; Sheffield District Railway Bill [H.L.]; South Eastern and London, Chatham, and Dover Railways Bill [H.L.]; South Lancashire Tramways (Extension of Time) Bill [H.L.]; Trent Navigation Company Bill [H.L.]; Wirral Railway (Extension of Time) Bill [H.L.]; Preston, Chorley and Horwich Tramways Bill [H.L.]. Read 2^a, and committed; the Committees to be proposed by the Committee of Selection 570

Great Central and Lancashire, Derbyshire, and East Coast Railways Bill [H.L.].—Sheffield District Railway Bill [H.L.]; Manchester and Milford Railway Bill [H.L.]; Sheffield Assay Office Bill [H.L.]; Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire Tramways Bill [H.L.]; Essex and Suffolk Equitable Insurance Society Bill [H.L.]; Bridgewater Canals Bill [H.L.]; Report from the Committee of Selection, That the following Lords be proposed to the House to form the Select Committee for the cnosideration of the said Bills; (viz.), D. Bedford (chairman), E. Stanford, E. Hardwicke, L. Napier of Magdala, L. Sanderson; agreed to; and the said Lords appointed accordingly: The Committee to meet on Tuesday next at Eleven o'clock; and all petitions referred to the Committee with leave to the petitioners praying to be heard by counsel against the Bill to be heard as desired as also counsel for the Bills 570

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).

No. 3533. Turkey (Trade of Constantinople and District).

No. 3534. France (Trade of Marseilles) 571

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AUSTRALIA.—Address from the House of Representatives and Resolution of the Senate on the subject of Home Rule for Ireland and the replies thereto .. 571

ROYAL UNIVERSITY OF IRELAND.—Annual Report for the year 1905 571

BULGARIA (NEW CUSTOMS TARIFF) (INTERIM STATEMENT).—

Translation of the New Customs Tariff of Bulgaria as modified by Commercial Conventions with the United Kingdom, Germany, France, and Italy.

Presented (by Command) and ordered to lie on the Table 571

WINTER ASSIZES ACT 1876, AND SPRING ASSIZES ACT, 1879.—Two Orders in Council, dated 27th February, 1906, constituting Spring Assize Counties Nos. 2 and 3 for the ensuing Spring Assizes 571

SHOP HOURS ACT, 1904.

Order made by the council of the county borough of Gateshead, and confirmed by the Secretary of State for the Home Department, fixing the hours of closing for certain shops within the borough.

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table 571

NEW BILLS.

Merchant Shipping (Aliens) Bill [H.L.].—A Bill to amend the Merchant Shipping Act, 1894. Was presented by the Lord Muskerry; read 1^a; and to be printed. (No. 24) 571

Poisons and Pharmacy Bill [H.L.].—A Bill to regulate the sale of certain poisonous substances and to amend the Pharmacy Acts. Was presented by the Lord President (*E. Crewe*); read 1^a; and to be printed. (No. 25.) .. 571

Judicature Bill [H.L.].—A Bill to amend the Judicature Acts, 1873 to 1894, with respect to the persons in whom the power of making rules of court under those Acts is vested. Was presented by the Lord Chancellor; read 1^a; and to be printed. (No. 26.) 571

Public Libraries Acts (Extension) Bill [H.L.].—A Bill to extend the Public Libraries Acts to counties. Was presented by the Lord James of Hereford; read 1^a; and to be printed. (No. 27.) 572

Public Health Acts (Amendment) Bill [H.L.].

Lord Hylton 572

Marine Insurance Bill [H.L.].—Bill read 3^a (according to order) and passed; and sent to the Commons 572

Prevention of Corruption Bill [H.L.].—Order of the day for the Third Reading read.

Moved, that the Bill be now read 3^a.—(*The Earl of Halsbury.*)

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Lord James of Hereford 572
Lord Avebury 573
The Earl of Halsbury 573
The Lord Chancellor (*Lord Loreburn*) 574

On question, Motion agreed to.

Privileged Amendment agreed to, and Bill passed ; and sent to the Commons.

WESTMINSTER BRIDGE AND THE EMBANKMENT.—Return.

The Duke of Rutland 575

Moved, "For a Return showing the dates of the construction of Westminster Bridge and the Thames Embankment, the sources out of which the funds were supplied, and the public bodies to whom the execution of the works was confided."—(*The Duke of Rutland.*)

The Earl of Liverpool 575

On Question, Motion agreed to.

SMALL HOLDINGS.

The Earl of Harrowby 577
Lord Hylton 580
The First Lord of the Admiralty (*Lord Tweedmouth*) 581
The Chairman of Committees (*The Earl of Onslow*) 583
Lord Barnard 586
Lord Zouche of Haryngworth 587
The Earl of Kimberley 589
Lord Oranmore and Browne 596
The President of the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries (*Earl Carrington*) 590
The Earl of Halsbury 593
Lord Saltoun 594
The Marquess of Lansdowne 595

BLACK ROD'S AUTHORITY.

The Chairman of Committees 597

Moved, "That a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into the power and authority which the Gentleman Usher of the Black Rod exercises, and has in past times exercised, with reference to the appointment and control of the door-keepers and messengers of this House, and the origin thereof ; and whether it is legally competent for this House to transfer such appointment and control to any other person."—(*The Earl of Onslow.*)

On Question, Motion agreed to.

Moved, That the following Lords be named of the Committee :—L. Chancellor, D. Norfolk, E. Liverpool (*L. Steward*), E. Onslow, E. Cawdor, E. Halsbury, V. Knutsford, L. Robertson.—(*The Earl of Onslow.*)

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On Question, Motion agreed to.

The Committee to appoint their own Chairman.

House adjourned at Six o'clock, till To-morrow, half-past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS: THURSDAY, 8TH MARCH, 1906.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS (STANDING ORDER 63 COMPLIED WITH).—Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, referred on the First Reading thereof, Standing Order No. 63 has been complied with, viz. :—North East Lincolnshire Water Bill.

Ordered, that the Bill be read a second time 598

PRIVATE BILLS [LORDS].—Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in respect of the following Bill comprised in the Report laid upon the Table by Mr. Speaker as intended to originate in the House of Lords, they have certified that the Standing Orders have not been complied with, viz. :—West Yorkshire Tramways 599

PRIVATE BILL PETITIONS [LORDS] (STANDING ORDERS NOT COMPLIED WITH).—Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the Petition for the following Bill, originating in the Lords, the Standing Orders have not been complied with, viz. :—West Yorkshire Tramways [Lords.]

Ordered that the Report be referred to the Select Committee on Standing Orders 599

Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire Electric Power Bill (BY ORDER).—Read a second time, and committed 599

London, Brighton, and South Coast Railway Bill (BY ORDER).—Second Reading deferred till Thursday next 599

South Wales Electrical Power Distribution Company Bill (BY ORDER).—Read a second time, and committed 599

London United Tramways Bill.—" For conferring further powers on the London United Tramways (1901), Limited, for constructing tramways and widening and altering streets and roads, and acquiring lands in the counties of Middlesex and Surrey; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 599

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Romford and District Tramways Bill.—"To incorporate the Romford and District Tramways Company; and to transfer to that Company the powers conferred by the Romford and District Tramways Act, 1903; and to confer further powers upon that Company, and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 599

Heacham Water Bill.—"To incorporate the Heacham Water Company, and to enable the company to supply water within the parish of Heacham and certain other parishes in the county of Norfolk," presented, and read the first time; and ordered to be read a second time 599

Wigan and Heysham Railway Bill.—Order (26th February) that the Wigan and Heysham Railway Bill be committed, read, and discharged. Bill withdrawn.—(*The Deputy Chairman.*) 600

PETITIONS.

JUVENILE SMOKING BILL.—Petition from Edinburgh, in favour; to lie upon the Table 600

PUBLIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS (RELIGIOUS TEACHING).—Petition from Edlington, against alteration of law; to lie upon the Table 600

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

INCOME TAX (ASSESSMENTS).—Return presented, relative thereto (Part I.) [ordered February 22nd; *Mr. Samuel Evans*]; to lie upon the Table .. 600

SPRING ASSIZES ACT, 1879.—Copies presented, of Two Orders in Council of February 27th, 1906, relating to the ensuing Intermediate Spring Assizes [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 600

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).—Copies presented, of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Annual Series, Nos. 3,533 and 3,534 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 600

PAPER LAID UPON THE TABLE BY THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE.—Irish Land Commission (Account), Copy of Report of the Comptroller and Auditor-General upon the Account of the Irish Land Commission for the year ended March 31st, 1905 [by Act]; to be printed. [No. 82] 600

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

CADETS COLLEGE AT OSBORNE—COST OF TRAINING.—Question, Mr. Bellairs (Lynn Regis); Answer, Mr. Edmund Robertson 600

ACCOUNTANT GENERAL'S DEPARTMENT—ADMIRALTY BRANCH REORGANISATION.—Question, Dr. Macnamara (Camberwell, N.); Answer, Mr. Edmund Robertson 601

POST OFFICE INQUIRY.—Question, Mr. Goddard Clarke (Camberwell, Peckham); Answer, Mr. Sydney Buxton 602

COUNTY DONEGAL TELEGRAPHIC SYSTEM.—Question, Mr. Hugh Law (Donegal, W.); Answer, Mr. Sydney Buxton 602

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Special Service Seamen and Stokers.—Question, Sir Charles Dilke (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean); Answer, Mr. Edmund Robertson 602

Sir A. Douglas' Committee on Naval Personnel.—Question, Mr. Bellairs; Answer, Mr. Edmund Robertson 603

Church Estates Commission Leases.—Question, Mr. Herbert Roberts (Denbighshire, W.); Answer, Mr. Stuart Wortley 603

Ecclesiastical Commission Staff.—Question, Mr. Herbert Roberts; Answer, Mr. Stuart Wortley 605

Flint Pier—County Kerry.—Question, Mr. Thomas O'Donnell (Kerry, W.); Answer, Mr. McKenna 607

Irish Training Colleges.—Question, Mr. John Redmond (Waterford); Answer, Mr. Bryce 607

Queen's College, Belfast.—Question, Mr. John Redmond; Answer, Mr. McKenna 608

Labourers' Cottage Scheme in Ireland.—Question, Mr Sheehan (Cork County, Mid.); Answer, Mr. McKenna 609

Fraudulent Army Enlistment—Case of H. Flanagan.—Question, Mr. Claude Hay (Shoreditch, Hoxton); Answer, Mr. Haldane 609

Militia Training.—Question, Mr. Lane-Fox (Yorks, W.R., Barkston Ash); Answer, Mr. Haldane 610

Married Soldiers' Accommodation at Chatham.—Question, Mr. Bennett (Oxon, Woodstock); Answer, Mr. Haldane 610

English Mails for Cyprus.—Question, Mr. Henniker Heaton (Canterbury); Answer, Mr. Churchill 610

Crown Colony Ordinances.—Questions, Mr. H. J. Wilson (Yorks, W.R., Holmforth); Answers, Mr. Churchill 611

Moyaller (County Down) Letter Deliveries.—Question, Mr. T. W. Russell (Tyrone, S.); Answer, Mr. Sydney Buxton 612

Scarva Pillar Box.—Question, Mr. Liddell (Down, W.); Answer, Mr. Sydney Buxton 612

Tidebrook Post Office.—Question, Mr. Courthope (Sussex, Rye); Answer, Mr. Sydney Buxton 612

Imorted Linen and Cotton Goods.—Question, Mr. Liddell; Answer, Mr. Lloyd-George 613

Salisbury Train Arrangements.—Question, Mr. Charles Schwann (Manchester, N.); Answer, Mr. Lloyd-George 613

German New General Tariff.—Question, Sir Howard Vincent (Sheffield, Central); Answer, Mr. Lloyd-George 613

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ROSYTH WORKS.—Question, Major Anstruther-Gray (St. Andrews Burghs); Answer, Mr. Lambert 614

CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTIONS TO THE EDUCATION RATE.—Question, Mr. G. A. Hardy (Suffolk, Stowmarket); Answer, Mr. Gladstone 614

COLONIAL CANDIDATES FOR THE CIVIL SERVICE.—Question, Mr. Harold Cox (Preston); Answer, Mr. McKenna 615

EXAMINATIONS FOR TEACHERS' TRAINING COLLEGES.—Question, Mr. Yoxall (Nottingham, W.); Answer, Mr. Lough 615

EMIGRATION OF POOR LAW CHILDREN TO CANADA.—Question, Mr. Lewis Haslam (Monmouth Boroughs); Answer, Mr. John Burns 616

ADULTERATED MILK PROSECUTION AT CARDIFF.—Question, Mr. Silcock (Somersetshire, Wells); Answer, Sir Edward Strachey 616

FALCARRAGH PETTY SESSIONS.—Question, Mr. Law (Donegal, N.); Answer, Mr. Bryce 616

INDIAN COUNCIL DRAFTS.—Question, Mr. Keswick (Surrey, Epsom); Answer, Mr. Morley 617

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Standardisation and Audit of Municipal Accounts.—Question, Sir W. Evans Gordon (Tower Hamlets, Stepney); Answer, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. John Burns, Battersea) 641

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GERMAN CHILDREN'S SCHOOL HOURS.—Question, Mr. L. Haslam; Answer, Mr. Birrell 644

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INCIDENCE OF THE EDUCATION RATE COMMITTEE.—Question, Dr. Macnamara; Answer, Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman 651

THE ARRANGEMENT OF QUESTIONS.—Questions, Mr. Swift MacNeill (Donegal, S.), and Mr. Bell (Derby); Answers, Mr. Speaker 652

One other Member took and subscribed the Oath:

NEW MEMBER SWORN.—Richard Hazleton, esquire, for the County of Galway (North Galway Division) 653

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SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES).—Sir BRAMPTON GURDON reported from the Committee of Selection: That they had nominated the following eleven Members to serve on the Standing Committee on Trade (including Agriculture and Fishing), Shipping, and Manufactures, in respect of the Notice of Accidents Bill:—Mr. Cochrane, Mr. Carlile, Mr. Bell, Mr. Secretary Gladstone, Lord Robert Cecil, Mr. Solicitor-General, Mr. Evans, Mr. Glover, Mr. Myer, Mr. John Ward, and Mr. Havelock Wilson.

Report to lie upon the Table 653

SELECTION (PRIVATE LEGISLATION PROCEDURE (SCOTLAND) ACT, 1899) (COMMISSIONERS).—Sir BRAMPTON GURDON reported from the Committee of Selection, That they had discharged Mr. Younger, and had appointed Viscount Dalrymple as a Member of the Parliamentary Panel of Members of this House to serve as a Commissioner:

Report to lie upon the Table 653

NEW BILLS.

Character Note Bill.—"To make it compulsory upon employers to supply a Reference Note to a person leaving their employment and desiring one," presented by Mr. Bell; supported by Mr. Seddon and Mr. T. F. Richards; to be read a second time upon Friday, March 30th, and to be printed. [Bill 81.] 654

Male Offenders (Whipping) Bill.—"To restrict the punishment of Whipping to the cases of Male Offenders under the age of sixteen years," presented by Mr. Lloyd Morgan; supported by Mr. Eugene Wason, Mr. Abel Thomas, Mr. Trevelyan, and Mr. G. Hay Morgan; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 82.] 654

Petty Sessional Divisions (Clerks) Bill.—"To prohibit Clerks to Petty Sessional Divisions of Counties from undertaking prosecutions of persons committed for trial by the justices of such Petty Sessional Divisions," presented by Mr. Lloyd Morgan; supported by Sir Joseph Leese, Mr. Abel Thomas, Mr. Brynmor Jones, and Mr. Wallace; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 83.] 654

Land Valuation Bill.—"To provide for the better Valuation of landed property in the United Kingdom," presented by Mr. Dundas White; supported by Mr. Pickersgill, Mr. Sutherland, Mr. Rainy, Mr. Findlay, and Mr. Wedgwood; to be read a second time upon Friday, March 23rd, and to be printed. [Bill 84.] 654

Resident Magistrates (Belfast) Bill.—"To make provision for the appointment and remuneration of Resident Magistrates in Belfast," presented by Sir Daniel Dixon; supported by Mr. Wolff, Mr. Sloan, Mr. John Gordon, Mr. Charles Craig, Mr. Thomas Corbett, and Viscount Castlereagh; to be read a second time upon Friday, March 23rd, and to be printed. [Bill 85.] 654

Metropolitan Borough Councils Association Bill.—"To remove doubts as to the legality of the payment of certain expenses by Councils of Metropolitan Boroughs," presented by Sir William Bull; supported by Dr. Macnamara, Mr. W. F. D. Smith, Mr. Remnant, Mr. Crooks, and Mr. Nield; to be read a second time upon Friday, March 23rd, and to be printed. [Bill 86.] 655

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Agricultural Education in Elementary Schools Bill.—" To promote Agricultural Education and Nature Study in Public Elementary Schools," presented by Mr. Jesse Collings; supported by Sir John Kennaway, Mr. Rothschild, Sir Francis Lowe, and Mr. Hunt; to be read a second time upon Thursday, March 29th, and to be printed. [Bill 87.] 655

Purchase of Land (England and Wales) Bill.—" To provide facilities for the Sale of Land to Occupying Tenants; and to extend the system of Peasant Proprietary in England and Wales," presented by Mr. Jesse Collings; supported by Sir John Kennaway, Mr. Herbert Roberts, Colonel Kenyon-Slaney, Colonel Lockwood, and Sir Frederick Carne Rasch; to be read a second time upon Thursday, March 29th, and to be printed. [Bill 88.] .. 655

Small Holdings (No. 2) Bill.—" To amend The Small Holdings Act, 1892," presented by Mr. Jesse Collings; supported by Colonel Long, Mr. Hunt, Mr. Bridgeman, and Sir Frederick Carne Rasch; to be read a second time upon Thursday, March 29th, and to be printed. [Bill 89.] 655

SUPPLY (ARMY ESTIMATES).

Order for Committee read.

The Secretary of State for War (*Mr. Haldane, Haddington*) 655

Motion made and Question proposed, " That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."

Mr. Arnold-Forster (*Croydon*) 686
Major Seely (*Liverpool, Abercromby*) 695
Lord Morpeth (*Birmingham, S.*) 698
Mr. Charles Hobhouse (*Bristol, E.*) 702
Mr. Wyndham (*Dover*) 706
Mr. Molteno (*Dumfriesshire*) 712
Captain Craig (*Down, E.*) 713
Colonel Herbert (*Monmouthshire, S.*) 715
Mr. Lea (*St. Pancras, E.*) 718

And, it being half-past Seven of the clock, the debate stood adjourned till this Evening's Sitting.

EVENING SITTING.

SUPPLY (ARMY ESTIMATES).

Order read, for resuming adjourned debate on Question [8th March], " That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."

Question again proposed.

Debate resumed.

Mr. Lea 719
Mr. J. R. Macdonald (*Leicester*) 722
Mr. Barnes (*Glasgow, Blackfriars*) 725

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out from the word 'That,' to the end of the Question, in order to add the words 'in the opinion of this House, the conditions of labour in the Arsenals should be, as regards hours, wages, and right of combination, equal to the best trade union private firm.'"—(*Mr. Ramsay Macdonald.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

Mr. Haldane 728
Mr. Crooks (*Woolwich*) 731
Colonel Lockwood (*Essex, Epping*) 734
Mr. Lupton (*Lincolnshire, Sleaford*) 734
Mr. Lane-Fox (*Yorkshire, W.R., Barkston Ash*) 736

Question put, and agreed to.

Main Question put, and agreed to.

SUPPLY.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. EMMOTT (Oldham) in the Chair.]

ARMY ESTIMATES, 1906–7.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a number of Land Forces not exceeding 204,100, all ranks, be maintained for the Service of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland at Home and Abroad, excluding His Majesty's Indian Possessions, during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1907."

Lord Castlereagh (*Maidstone*) 739
Mr. Verney (*Buckinghamshire, N.*) 741
Mr. Guest (*Cardiff District*) 742
Mr. Arnold-Forster (*Croydon*) 746

Motion made and Question, "That the Chairman do report Progress; and ask leave to sit again"—(*Sir Howard Vincent*)—put, and agreed to.

Committee report Progress; to sit again upon Monday next.

Parliamentary Voters (Registration) Bill.—Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Debate arising.

And, it being Midnight, the debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed to-morrow 748

Adjourned at one minute after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS: FRIDAY, 9TH MARCH, 1906.

Several Lords took the Oath.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

The LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House That the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the Certificates from the Examiners that the Standing Orders applicable to the following Bills have not been complied with:—Folkestone, Sandgate, and Hythe Tramways (No. 1); Folkestone, Sandgate, and Hythe Tramways (No. 2).

Also the Certificates that the further Standing Orders applicable to the following Bills have been complied with:—County of Durham Electric Power Supply [H.L.]; Newcastle-upon-Tyne Electric Supply [H.L.]; Knott End Railway (Extension of Time) [H.L.]; Railway Clearing System (Superannuation Fund) [H.L.].

And also the Certificate that the further Standing Orders applicable to the following Bill have not been complied with:—Mullingar, Kells, and Drogheda Railway [H.L.].

The same were ordered to lie on the Table 749

West Yorkshire Tramways Bill [H.L.].—Presented and read 1ª 749

Dover Harbour Board Bill [H.L.].—Reported, with Amendments 749

Norwich Union Life Insurance Society Bill [H.L.].—Read 2ª, and committed 749

PETITIONS.

SUNDAY CLOSING OF SHOPS.—Petitions in favour of; of Trade Associations (44); the Lords Day Rest Association; Early Closing Association; and persons signing (13); read, and ordered to lie on the Table 749

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

COLONIES: ANNUAL:—No. 481. Ceylon (Report for 1904). Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table 750

INTERMEDIATE EDUCATION (IRELAND).—Rule made by the Intermediate Education Board for Ireland making an alteration in the Honours Course, Irish Middle Grade Programme, 1906 750

SUPERANNUATION.

Treasury Minute, dated 1st March, 1906, declaring that Richard Hickson, labourer, Royal Small Arms Factory, Enfield, War Office, was appointed without a Civil Service certificate through inadvertence on the part of the Head of his Department.

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table 750

SUNDAY OPENING OF SHOPS.

Lord Avebury 750

Moved to resolve, "That, in the opinion of this House, the subject of the Sunday opening of shops demands the serious and early attention of His Majesty's Government."—(*Lord Avebury.*)

The Lord Archbishop of Canterbury 756
The First Lord of the Admiralty (*Lord Tweedmouth*) 762
The Marquess of Lansdowne 764
The Duke of Northumberland 765
Lord Kinnaird 767
Lord Avebury 768

On Question, Motion agreed to.

Moved, to resolve "That it is desirable that a Joint Committee of both Houses be appointed to inquire into the subject of Sunday trading."—(*Lord Tweedmouth*).

On Question, Motion agreed to.

Ordered, that a message be sent to the Commons to communicate this Resoution, and to desire their concurrence.

House adjourned at twenty minutes before Six o'clock to Monday next, a quarter beofre eleven o'clock

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HOUSE OF COMMONS, FRIDAY, 9TH MARCH, 1906.

The House met at Twelve of the clock.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS [LORDS].—Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in respect of the following Bills comprised in the Report laid upon the Table by Mr. Speaker as intended to originate in the House of Lords, they have certified that the Standing Orders have not been complied with, viz. :—Folkestone, Sandgate, and Hythe Tramways (No. 1); Folkestone, Sandgate, and Hythe Tramways (No. 2) 770

PRIVATE BILL PETITIONS [LORDS] (STANDING ORDERS NOT COMPLIED WITH).—Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Reports from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the Petitions for the following Bills, originating in the Lords, the Standing Orders have not been complied with, viz. :—Folkestone, Sandgate, and Hythe Tramways (No. 1) [Lords]; Folkestone, Sandgate, and Hythe Tramways (No. 2) [Lords].

Ordered, That the Reports be referred to the Select Committee on Standing Orders 770

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PETITIONS.

LAND VALUES (ASSESSMENT AND RATING) BILL.—Petition from Chester, in favour; to lie upon the Table 770

PUBLIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS (RELIGIOUS TEACHING).—Petition from Biddenham, against alteration of Law; to lie upon the Table 770

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

INTERMEDIATE EDUCATION (IRELAND).—Copy presented, of Rule made by the Intermediate Education Board for Ireland making an alteration in the Honours Course, Irish, Middle Grade Programme, 1906 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 770

SUPERANNUATION ACT, 1884.—Copy presented, of Treasury Minute, declaring that Richard Hickson, labourer, Royal Small Arms Factory, Enfield, War Office, was appointed without a Civil Service certificate, through inadvertence on the part of the Head of his Department [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 771

EAST INDIA (MINERAL CONCESSIONS).—Address for "Return of the Mineral Concessions granted in India during the years 1889 to 1904 inclusive, showing the position and extent of the areas granted, names of grantees, and terms of grant."—(*Mr. Charles Schwann.*) 771

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

POSTAL DELIVERIES IN ABERDEEN.—Question, Mr. Pirie (Aberdeen, N.); Answer, Mr. Sydney Buxton 771

DUTIES OF UNESTABLISHED LEARNERS AT CLONES POST OFFICE.—Question, Mr. Sloan (Belfast, S.); Answer, Mr. Sydney Buxton 771

DUTIES OF MALE AND FEMALE TELEGRAPHISTS AT ENNISKILLEN POST OFFICE.—Question, Mr. James O'Connor (Wicklow, W.); Answer, Mr. Sydney Buxton 772

POST OFFICES UNDER GUARANTEE.—Questions, Lieut.-Col. Philipps (Southampton); Answer, Mr. Sydney Buxton 772

HOURS WORKED BY GOODS PORTERS AT GOOLE, LANCASHIRE AND YORKSHIRE RAILWAY.—Question, Mr. Bell (Derby); Answer, Mr. Lloyd-George .. 773

ITALIAN CUSTOMS DUTY ON IMPORTED PILCHARDS.—Question, Mr. Dunn (Cornwall, Camborne); Answer, Mr. Lloyd-George 773

DISTRICTS PATROLLED BY AND PACE OF STEAMERS "HELGA" AND "GRANUAILE" ON WEST COAST OF IRELAND.—Question, Mr. Boland (Kerry, S.); Answer, Mr. Bryce 773

SALARIES OF PRINCIPAL TEACHERS IN IRISH AND ENGLISH NATIONAL SCHOOLS.—Question, Mr. Sloan; Answer, Mr. Bryce 774

SPECIAL CONSIDERATION FOR TEACHERS IN LARGE SCHOOLS IN IRELAND.—Question, Mr. Sloan; Answer, Mr. Bryce 775

INFANT MALES IN BOYS' SCHOOLS.—Question, Mr. James O'Connor; Answer, Mr. Bryce 775

Land Tenure Bill.

Order for Second Reading read.

Mr. Agar Robartes (*Cornwall, Bodmin*) 776
Mr. Soares (*Devonshire, Barnstaple*) 780

Question proposed, "That this Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Agar Robartes.*)

Lord Helmsley (*Yorkshire, N.R., Thirsk*) 785
Mr. Hicks Beach (*Gloucestershire, Tewkesbury*) 791

Amendment proposed—

> "To leave out from the word 'That,' to the end of the Question, in order to add the words, 'while admitting the desirability of remedying any legitimate grievance which may be proved to exist in regard to the occupation of their holdings by agricultural tenants, this House declines to assent to a Bill which conduces to dual ownership, which involves breach of contract, and which would seriously prejudice the position of the incoming tenant, as it considers that such changes would be injurious to the real interests of all classes connected with agriculture.'"—(*Viscount Helmsley.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

Mr. Munro Ferguson (*Leith Burghs*) 796
Mr. Laurence Hardy (*Kent, Ashford*) 799
Mr. Bennett (*Oxfordshire, Woodstock*) 804
Mr. Nicholls (*Northamptonshire, N.*) 808
Sir Edward Strachey (*Somersetshire, S.*) 809
Mr. J. F. Mason (*Windsor*) 813
Mr. Winfrey (*Norfolk, S.W.*) 815
Lord Willoughby de Eresby 818
Mr. J. E. Barlow (*Somersetshire, Frome*) 823
Lord Turnour (*Sussex, Horsham*) 824
The Secretary for Scotland (*Mr. Sinclair, Forfarshire*) 825
Mr. Walter Long (*Dublin, S.*) 826

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 332; Noes, 77. (Division List No. 7.)

Main Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 334; Noes, 81. (Division List No. 8.)

Bill read a second time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be committed to the Standing Committee on Trade, etc."—(*Mr. Agar Robartes.*)

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Sir Edward Carson (*Dublin University*) 841
Mr. Laurence Hardy (*Kent, Ashford*) 842

Mr. Agar Robartes rose in his place, and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put."

Question put, "That the Question be now put."

The House divided :—Ayes, 306 ; Noes, 72. (Division List No. 9.)

Question put accordingly, and agreed to.

Bill committed to the Standing Committee on Trade, etc.

Local Government (Scotland) Bill.

Order for Second Reading read, and discharged.

Bill withdrawn.

Post Office Servants.—The Select Committee on Post Office Servants was nominated of : Mr. Barker, Mr. Frank Edwards, Mr. Claude Hay, Sir Clement Hill, Mr. Hobhouse, Mr. Meehan, Mr. Sutherland, Mr. John Ward, and Mr. Wardle.—(*Mr. George Whiteley.*) 847

Education (Provision of Meals) Bill.

The Select Committee on the Education (Provision of Meals) Bill was nominated of : Mr. Bridgeman, Sir William Collins, Captain Craig, Sir Henry Craik, Sir John Dickson-Poynder, Mr. Henderson, Mr. Lough, Dr. Macnamara, Mr. M'Kean, Mr. Nolan, Mr. W. E. B. Priestley, Sir Francis Sharp Powell, Mr. Herbert Roberts, Mr. Trevelyan, and Mr. Whitbread.

Ordered, That the Committee have power to send for persons, papers, and records.

Ordered, That Five be the quorum of the Committee.—(*Mr. George Whiteley.*)

Whereupon Mr. Speaker adjourned the house without Question put, in pursuance of Standing Order No. 3 848

Adjourned at fourteen minutes before Six o'clock till Monday next.

HOUSE OF LORDS: MONDAY, 12TH MARCH, 1906.

Airth Peerage.—Petition of Robert Barclay-Allardice Barclay-Allardice for leave to refer in his printed case to the documents put in and other evidence adduced in the proceedings on the Petitioner's grandfather's and mother's claims respectively, and to found upon the same before their Lordships and their Committee for privileges as evidence in support of the claim of the Petitioner in so far as their Lordships may think fit to accept the same ; read and ordered as prayed 849

Several Lords took the Oath.

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PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

The Lord Chancellor acquainted the House that the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the Certificate from the Examiners that the Standing Orders applicable to the following Bill have been complied with :—Scottish Union and National Insurance Company—(Substituted Bill)

And also the Certificate that the further Standing Orders applicable to the following Bill have been complied with :—North Sussex Gas and Water [H.L.]

The same were ordered to lie on the Table 849

Alexander (Newport and South Wales) Docks and Railway Bill [H.L.].; Channel Ferry Railway and Quay (Dover) Bill [H.L.]; West Yorkshire Tramways Bill [H.L.]; Folkestone, Sandgate, and Hythe Tramways (No. 1) Bill [H.L.] 849

Folkestone, Sandgate and Hythe Tramways (No. 2) Bill [H.L.].; Heacham Water Bill; London County Council (Tramways and Improvements) Bill; London United Tramways Bill; Middlesex County Council (Tramways) Bill; Romford and District Tramways Bill.—Examiners' Certificates of non-compliance with the Standing Orders referred to the Standing Orders Committee on Monday next 849

Folkestone, Sandgate, and Hythe Tramways (No. 1) Bill [H.L.].—Presented, read 1^{a}; and referred to the Examiners 850

Folkestone, Sandgate, and Hythe Tramways (No. 2) Bill [H.L.].—Presented and read 1^{a}. 850

County of Durham Electric Power Supply Bill [H.L.]; Newcastle-upon-Tyne Electric Supply Bill [H.L.].—Read $2,^{a}$ and committed. The Committees to be proposed by the Committee of Selection 850

Knott End Railway (Extension of Time) Bill [H.L.].—Read 2^{a}, and committed 850

Railway Clearing System (Superannuation Fund) Bill [H.L.].—Read 2^{a}, and committed. The Committee to be proposed by the Committee of Selection 850

Havana United Railways and Regla Warehouses Bill [H.L.]; Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway (Superannuation Fund) Bill [H.L.].—Read 2^{a}, and committed 850

Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway Bill [H.L.].; Crediton Lighting and Power Bill [H.L.]; Cardiff Railway Bill [H.L.]; Great Western and Rhymney Railway Companies Bill [H.L.]; Southport and Lytham Tramroad (Extension of Time) Bill [H.L.]; Buenos Ayres Grand National Tramways Bill [H.L.]; Great Northern (Ireland) and Midland Railways Bill [H.L.]; Portsmouth Water Bill [H.L.]; Truro Gas Bill [H.L.]. Read 2^{a}, and committed. The Committee to be proposed by the Committee of Secection .. 850

Cambrian Railways Bill [H.L.]; Barry Railway Bill [H.L.].—Read 2^{a}, and committed. The Committees to be proposed by the Committee of Selection 850

North Sussex Gas and Water Bill [H.L.].—Read 2^{a}, and committed .. 850

Vauclain's Patent Bill [H.L.].—Read 2^{a} (according to order), and committed 850

Thames Harbour Bill [H.L.].—The Chairman of Committees informed the House that the Promoters do not intend to proceed further with the Bill; Order for the Second Reading on Thursday next discharged; Ordered that the Bill be not further proceeded with 850

Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire Tramways Bill [H.L.].—The Chairman of Committees informed the House that the opposition to the Bill was withdrawn. The orders made on Thursday last discharged, and Bill committed 851

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

Scotch Education Department.—Code of Regulations for Day Schools, 1906; with Appendices 851

Trade Reports (Annual Series).—No. 3535. Netherlands (Trade and Navigation of the Port of Amsterdam).

No. 3536. United States (Finances of the United States for the year ended 30th June, 1905) 851

Agricultural Statistics (Ireland), 1905 (Migratory Labourers).—Report and tables relating to Irish migratory, agricultural, and other labourers for the year 1905.

Presented (by command), and ordered to lie on the Table 851

Polling Districts (County Councils) Bill [H.L.]—[Second Reading].—Order of the Day for the Second Reading read.

Lord Monkswell 851

Moved, that the Bill be now read 2^{a}.—(*Lord Monkswell*).

The President of the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries (*Earl Carrington*) 851

On Question, Bill read 2^{a}.

Committed to a Committee of the Whole House to-morrow.

Polling Arrangements (Parliamentary Boroughs) Bil [H.L.]—Second Reading].—Order of the Day for the Second Reading read.

Lord Monkswell 852

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2^{a}."—(*Lord Monkswell.*)

On Question, Bill read 2^{a}.

Committed to a Committee of the Whole House to-morrow.

Office of the Gentleman Usher of the Black Rod.—Moved, "That the Earl of Camperdown be added to the Select Committee."—(*The Earl of Onslow.*)

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The Lord Privy Seal (*The Marquess of Ripon*) 853

On Question, Motion agreed to.

The Earl of Camperdown added to the Select Committee.

House adjourned at Twenty-five minutes before Five o'clock, till To-morrow, half-past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS: MONDAY, 12TH MARCH, 1906.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS (STANDING ORDER 63 COMPLIED WITH).—Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, that, in the case of the following Bill, referred on the First Reading thereof, Standing Order 63 has been complied with, viz.:—Mid. Oxfordshire Gas Bill.

Ordered, that the Bill be read a second time 854

PRIVATE BILLS [LORDS].—Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, that, in respect of the following Bill, introduced pursuant to the provisions of the Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899, and which the Chairman of Ways and Means had directed to originate in the House of Lords, they have certified that the Standing Orders have been complied with, viz.:—Scottish Union and National Insurance Company 854

Brixham Gas (Electric Lighting) Bill; Cheltenham Gas Bill; London and South Western Railway Bill.—Read a second time, and committed 854

Rochester, Chatham, and Strood Gas Bill.—Read a second time, and committed 854

PETITIONS.

LAND VALUES (ASSESSMENT AND RATING BILL).—Petition from Ventnor, in favour; to lie upon the Table 854

PUBLIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS (RELIGIOUS TEACHING).—Petitions against alteration of Law; from Childerditch; Scorton (two); and Thistleton; to lie upon the Table 854

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

INTERMEDIATE EDUCATION (IRELAND).—Paper [presented 9th March] to be printed. [No. 83.] 855

EAST INDIA (MINERAL CONCESSIONS).—Return presented, relative thereto [Address 9th March; *Mr. Charles Schwann*]; to lie upon the Table .. 855

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COLONIAL REPORTS (ANNUAL).—Copy presented, of Colonial Reports, No. 481 (Ceylon, Annual Report for 1904) [by Command]; to lie upon the Table .. 855

AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS (IRELAND) (MIGRATORY LABOURERS).—Copy presented, of Report and Tables relating to Irish Migratory Agricultural and other Labourers for the year 1905 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 855

EDUCATION (SCOTLAND) (CODE 1906).—Copy presented, of Code of Regulations for Day Schools, 1906, with Appendices [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 855

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).—Copies presented, of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Annual Series, Nos. 3535 and 3536 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 855

PAPER LAID UPON THE TABLE BY THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE.—Inquiry into Charities (County of Wilts). Further Return relative thereto [ordered 9th August, 1901; *Mr. Griffith Boscawen*]; to be printed. [No. 84.] 855

DIPLOMATIC REPORTS (COAL).—Return ordered, "of Extracts relating to Coal from the Reports received up to the present date from His Majesty's Diplomatic and Consular Officers Abroad for 1904 and 1905, or from such Reports received since the date of the similar Return issued in October, 1904 (Parliamentary Paper, No. 343, of Session 1904)."—(*Mr. Fenwick.*) 855

NATIONAL SCHOOLS (IRELAND).—Return ordered, "showing (1) the number of National Schools in each county in Ireland in which, according to the latest Returns, Irish is taught as an extra subject, third year's course; (2) the number of National Schools in each county in Ireland in which, according to the latest Returns, Irish is taught as an extra subject, second year's course; (3) the number of National Schools in each county in Ireland in which, according to the latest Returns, Irish is taught as an extra subject, first year's course; (4) the number of National Schools in each county in Ireland in which Irish is taught as an ordinary subject; and (5) the number of Intermediate Schools in each county in Ireland in which Irish is taught (a) in the preparatory grade; (b) in the junior grade; (c) in the middle grade; (d) in the senior grade."—(*Mr. Nannetti.*) 856

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

SALE OF LANDS CHARGED WITH LOANS FOR PIERS AND HARBOURS.—Question, Mr. Thomas O'Donnell (Kerry, W.); Answer, Mr. Bryce 856

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SANITARY CONDITION OF CLONES RAILWAY POSTAL TELEGRAPH OFFICE.—Question, Mr. Sloan (Belfast, S.); Answer, Mr. Sydney Buxton 867

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OLD-AGE PENSIONS (NO. 2) BILL.—Order for Second Reading upon Wednesday read, and discharged. Bill withdrawn 942

NEW MEMBER SWORN.—The right hon. Arthur James Balfour, for the City of London 942

One other Member took and subscribed the Oath.

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.—Sunday Trading, That they have come to the following Resolution, viz.: That it is desirable that a Joint Committee of both Houses be appointed to inquire into the subject of Sunday Trading .. 942

NEW BILLS.

Salmon Fisheries (Ireland) Bill.—"To amend the Law relating to Boards of Conservators of Fisheries in Ireland," presented by Mr. Joyce; supported by Mr. Boland, Mr. Flavin, Mr. Halpin, Mr. O'Shee, Mr. Cullinan, and Mr. Lundon; to be read a second time upon Monday, 26th March, and to be printed. [Bill 90.] 942

Municipal Powers Bill.—" To enlarge the Powers of Local Authorities in respect of the purchase of land, the building of houses, and the acquisition or establishment of trading undertakings," presented by Mr. Money ; supported by Sir Charles Dilke, Mr. Alden, Mr. Gooch, and Mr. Henderson ; to be read a second time upon Monday, 26th March, and to be printed. [Bill 91.] 942

Education (Provision of Meals) (Scotland) Bill.—" To amend the Education (Scotland) Acts, 1872 to 1893," presented by Mr. Barnes ; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 92.] 943

Statute Law Revision (Scotland) Bill.—" To further promote the Revision of the Statute Law by repealing enactments which have ceased to be in force or have become unnecessary," presented by The Lord Advocate ; supported by Mr. Solicitor-General for Scotland ; to be read a second time To-morrow, and to be printed. [Bill 94.] 943

Seed Potatoes Supply (Ireland) Bill.—" To make provision with respect to loans and sales made for the purpose of the Supply of Seed Potatoes to occupiers and cultivators of land in Ireland," presented by Mr. Bryce ; to be read a second time To-morrow and to be printed. [Bill 93.] 943

Butter Trade.—Mr. Dalziel, Sir Edwin Cornwall, Mr. Courthope, Mr. Lonsdale, Mr. Steadman, Major McMicking, Mr. Scott, Mr. James Stuart, Mr. Osmond Williams, Sir Edward Strachey, Mr. Warner, Viscount Morpeth, Mr. Hicks Beach, Mr. Flynn, and Mr. Lundon were nominated Members of the Select Committee on the Butter Trade.

Ordered, That the Committee have power to send for persons, papers, and records.

Ordered, That Five be the quorum.—(*Sir Edward Strachey.*) 943

Free Trade and Fiscal Reform.

Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman 944

Motion made, and Question proposed, " That the proceedings on the Motion relating to Free Trade, if under discussion at Twelve o'clock this night, be not interrupted under the Standing Order (Sittings of the House)."—(*Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman.*)

Question put.

The House divided :—Ayes, 362 ; Noes, 113. (Division List No. 10.)

Free Trade.

Sir James Kitson (*Yorkshire, W.R., Colne Valley*) 949
Mr. Austen Taylor (*Liverpool, East Toxteth*) 956

Motion made, and Question proposed, " That this House, recognising that in the recent General Election the people of the United Kingdom have demonstrated their unqualified fidelity to the principles and practice of Free Trade, deems it right to record its determination to resist any proposal, whether by way of taxation upon foreign corn, or of the creation of a general tariff upon foreign goods, to create in this country a system of protection."—(*Sir James Kitson.*)

Mr. A. J. Balfour (*City of London*) 961
Mr. Russell Rea (*Gloucester*) 974
Mr. J. Chamberlain (*Birmingham, W.*) 983

Motion made and Question proposed, "That the debate be now adjourned."—(*Mr. J. Chamberlain.*)

Mr. Dalziel (*Kirkcaldy Burghs*) 988
Mr. A. J. Balfour 988
The Prime Minister and First Lord of the Treasury (*Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman, Stirling Burghs*) 990
Mr. Austen Chamberlain (*Worcestershire, E.*) 992
Sir Edwin Cornwall (*Bethnall Green, N.E.*) 994
Mr. Burdett-Coutts (*Westminster*) 994

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 115; Noes, 405. (Division List, No. 11.)

Original Question again proposed.

Mr. Llewelyn Williams (*Carmarthen Districts*) 1001

And, it being half-past Seven of the clock, the debate stood adjourned till this Evening's Sitting.

EVENING SITTING.

Free Trade.—Order read, for resuming Adjourned debate on Question [12th March], "That this House, recognising that in the recent General Election the people of the United Kingdom have demonstrated their unqualified fidelity to the principles and practice of Free Trade, deems it right to record its determination to resist any proposal, whether by way of taxation upon foreign corn or of the creation of a general tariff upon foreign goods, to create in this country a system of protection."—(*Sir James Kitson.*)

Question again proposed.

Debate resumed.

Mr. Llewelyn Williams 1003
Mr. Snowden (*Blackburn*) 1007
Mr. F. E. Smith (*Liverpool, Walton*) 1014
The President of the Board of Trade (*Mr. Lloyd-George, Carnarvon Boroughs*) 1023
Sir Edward Clarke (*City of London*) 1036
Mr. Brace (*Glamorganshire, S.*) 1048

Motion made, and Question, "That the debate be now adjourned,"—(*Sir Alexander Acland-Hood*) put, and agreed to.

Debate to be resumed To-morrow.

LABOURERS (IRELAND) ACTS.—Return ordered, "giving (1) two or more examples of Reports of inspectors of the Local Government Board in respect of local inquiries held in the years 1904 and 1905; (2) two or more examples of Reports taken by the official notetakers of the proceedings on petitions under the Acts to the Privy Council."—(*Mr. O'Shee*) 1052

Salmon Fisheries (Ireland) Bill.—Order for Second Reading upon Monday, 26th March, read, and discharged. Bill withdrawn 1052

And, it being after One of the clock, Mr. Speaker adjourned the House without Question put.

Adjourned at six minutes after One o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS: TUESDAY, 13TH MARCH, 1906.

VISCOUNT POWERSCOURT.—Petition of Mervyn Richard Wingfield, Viscount Powerscourt of Powerscourt in the county of Wicklow, in the Peerage of Ireland, and Baron Powerscourt in the Peerage of the United Kingdom, claiming a right to vote at the elections of Representative Peers for Ireland; read, and referred to the Lord Chancellor to consider and report thereupon to the House 1053

THE LORD LOVAT.—Took the Oath.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Great Yarmouth Waterworks and Lowestoft Water and Gas Bill [H.L.].—[SECOND READING].

Order of the Day for the Second Reading read.

Lord Balfour of Burleigh 1053

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª."—(*Lord Balfour of Burleigh.*)

The Earl of Kimberley 1056

Amendment moved—
"To leave out the word 'now,' in order to insert at the end these words: 'this day six months.'"—(*The Earl of Kimberley.*)

The Chairman of Committees (*The Earl of Onslow*) 1058
The Lord Privy Seal (*The Marquess of Ripon*) 1059

Amendment, by leave of the House, withdrawn,

On Question Bill read 2ª.

Scottish Union and National Insurance Company Bill [H.L.].—Presented, read 1ª; and referred to the Examiners 1060

Milford Docks Bills [H.L.]; H. R. Baines & Company Bill [H.L.]; Crystal Palace Company Bill [H.L.].—Reported, with Amendments 1060

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Wallasey Tramways and Improvements Bill [H.L.].—Read 2^a (according to Order), and committed: the Committee to be proposed by the Committee of selection 1060

Dover Harbour Board Bill [H.L.].—Read 3^a, and passed, and sent to the Commons 1060

Mersey Docks and Harbour Board Bill [H.L.]; Penllwyn Railway and Road Bill [H.L.]; London and North Western Railway Bill [H.L.]; Great Western and Rhymney Railway Companies Bill [H.L.]; Barry Railway Bill [H.L.]; Western Valleys (Monmouthshire) Sewerage Board Bill [H.L.]; Cardiff Railway Bill [H.L.].—Report from the Committee of Selection, That the following Lords be proposed to the House to form the Select Committee for the consideration of the said Bills; (viz.), E. Verulam, E. Dartrey (chairman), L. Monson, L. Seaton, L. Somerton (*E. Normanton*); agreed to; and the said Lords appointed accordingly. The Committee to meet on Thursday, the 22nd instant, at eleven o'clock; and all petitions referred to the Committee, with leave to the petitioners praying to be heard by counsel against the Bills to be heard as desired, as also counsel for the Bills 1060

Mersey Railway Bill [H.L.]; Wirral Railway (Extension of Time) Bill [H.L.]; Wallasey Tramways and Improvements Bill [H.L.]; Accrington District Gas and Water Board Bill [H.L.]; Holyhead Water Bill [H.L.]; Fulwood Urban District Water Bill [H.L.]; Wolstanton United Urban District Council Gas Bill [H.L.]; Preston, Chorley, and Horwich Tramways Bill [H.L.].—Report from the Committee of Selection, That the following Lords be proposed to the House to form the Select Committee for the consideration of the said Bills; (viz.), E. Cawdor (chairman), V. Hill, L. Ellenborough, L. Abinger, L. Northbourne; agreed to; and the said Lords appointed accordingly. The Committee to meet on Tuesday next, at Eleven o'clock; and all petitions referred to the Committee, with leave to the petitioners praying to be heard by counsel against the Bills to be heard as desired, as also counsel for the Bills 1060

Wallis' Divorce Bill [H.L.].—House in Committee (according to order). An Amendment made; Standing Committee negatived. The Report of Amendment to be received on Thursday next 1061

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

BRITISH GUIANA.—Correspondence relating to disturbances in British Guiana .. 1061

HISTORICAL MANUSCRIPTS (ROYAL COMMISSION).—Report on Franciscan manuscripts preserved at the Convent, Merchants' Quay, Dublin 1061

EMIGRATION STATISTICS (IRELAND).—Report and Tables for the year 1905 .. 1061

BIRTHS, MARRIAGES AND DEATHS, AND VACCINATION (SCOTLAND).—Fifty-first Annual Report of the Registrar-General in Scotland for the year 1905, and Forty-first Annual Report on Vaccination 1061

EDUCATION (SCOTLAND).—Return showing the expenditure from the grant for Public Education in Scotland in the year 1905; with statistics. Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table 1061

BRIDLINGTON PIERS AND HARBOUR.—Abstract of the Annual General Account for the year ended 26th July, 1905. Delivered (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table 1061

Naval Prize Bill [H.L.]. [SECOND READING].—Order of the Day for the Second Reading read.

The Lord Chancellor (*Lord Loreburn*) 1062

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª."—(*The Lord Chancellor.*)

On Question, Bill read 2ª, and committed to a Committee of the Whole House on Thursday next.

Prize Courts Bill [H.L.]. [SECOND READING.].—Order of the Day for the Second Reading read.

The Lord Chancellor 1062

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª."—(*The Lord Chancellor.*)

On Question, Bill read 2ª, and committed to a Committee of the Whole House on Thursday next.

Judicature Bill [H.L.].—[SECOND READING.]—Order of the day for the Second Reading read.

The Lord Chancellor 1062

Moved. "That the Bill be now read 2ª."—(*The Lord Chancellor.*)

On Question, Bill read 2ª, and committed to a Committee of the Whole House on Thursday next.

Polling Districts (County Councils) Bill [H.L.]; Polling Arrangements (Parliamentary Boroughs) Bill [H.L.]. House in Committee (according to order); Bills reported without Amendment; Standing Committee negatived; and Bills to be read 3ª on Thursday next 1063

ROYAL COMMISSION ON MOTOR CARS.

Lord Montagu of Beaulieu 1063
Earl Russell 1065
The President of the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries (*Earl Carrington*) 1066

Patents, Designs, and Trade Marks (Registration of Patent Agents) Bill [H.L.].—A Bill to amend the law relating to patent agents. Was presented by the Lord Coleridge; read 1ª; and to be printed. (No. 30.) 1066

Elections (Meetings in Schoolrooms) Bill [H.L.].—A Bill for granting the use of public elementary schoolrooms for the purpose of holding meetings in support of candidates for Parliamentary and other elections. Was presented by the Lord Burghclere; read 1ª; and to be printed. (No. 29.) 1066

HOUSE OF LORDS OFFICES.—Leave given to the Committee to report from time to time. First Report from the Select Committee made, to be printed, and to be considered on Thursday next. (No. 28.) 1066

COMMITTEE OF SELECTION FOR THE STANDING COMMITTEE.—Report from, That the Committee have nominated the following Lords to serve on the Standing Committee :—L. Archbp. of Canterbury, L. Chancellor, L. Archbp. of York, E. Crewe, (*L. President.*). M. Ripon (*L. Privy Seal*), D. Bedford, D. Devonshire, D. Northumberland, M. Winchester, M. Lansdowne, M Salisbury, M. Bath, M. Linlithgow, E. Liverpool (*L. Steward*), E. Derby, E. Denbigh, E. Stamford, E. Chesterfield, E. Jersey, E. Lauderdale, E. Carnwath, E. Waldegrave, E. Portsmouth, E. Spencer, E. Clarendon, E. Cadogan, E. Malmesbury, E. Westmeath, E. Onslow, E. Beauchamp, E. Stradbroke, E. Vane (*M. Londonderry*), E. Cawdor, E. Camperdown, E. Lichfield, E. Yarborough, E. Russell, E. Dartrey, E. Feversham, E. Lytton, E. Ancaster, E. Halsbury, E. Plymouth. V. Falkland V. Hutchinson (*E. Donoughmore*), V. Hampden, V. Cross, V. Knutsford, V. Llandaff, V. Goschen, V. Ridley, V. Churchill, V. Selby, V. St. Aldwyn, L. Bp. London, L. Bp. Hereford, L. Bp. Southwark, L. Zouche of Haryngworth, L. Clifford of Chudleigh, L. Barnard L. Saltoun, L. Balfour, L. Monson, L. Kenyon, L. Stewart of Garlies (*E. Galloway*), L. Ribblesdale, L. Harris, L. Ranfurly (*E. Ranfurly*), L. Rosebery (*E. Rosebery*), L. Kilmarnock (*E. Erroll*), L. Poltimore, L. Denman, L. Oranmore and Browne, L. Kintore (*E. Kintore*), L. Elgin (*E. Elgin and Kincardine*), L. Belper, L. Brougham and Vaux, L. Kinnaird, L. Lawrence, L. Wolverton, L. Sandhurst, L. Reay, L. Tweedmouth, L. Monk Bretton, L. Herries, L. Monkswell, L. Ashbourne, L. Montagu Beaulieu, L. Thring, L. Macnaghten, L. Ashcombe, L. Newton, L. Stanmore, L. Davey, L. Burghclere, L. James, L. Heneage, L. Ludlow, of L. Newlands, L. Avebury, L. Alverstone, L. Shuttleworth, L. Allerton, L. Waleran, L. Knaresborough, L. Desborough, L. Weardale, L. Haversham. Read, and ordered to lie on the Table .. 1067

House adjourned at Five o'clock to Thursday next, half-past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS: TUESDAY, 13TH MARCH, 1906.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Ascot District Gas (Electric Lighting) Bill; North East Lincolnshire Water Bill. To be read a second time to-morrow 1068

North-West London Railway Bill (BY ORDER); Twickenham and Teddington Electric Supply Bill (by Order); Metropolitan Electric Supply Bill (by Order). Second Reading deferred till Tuesday next 1068

Milwall Dock Bill.—Reported, with an Amendment; Report to lie upon the Table 1068

North Metropolitan Tramways Bill.—Reported, with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed 1068

PETITIONS.

CANADIAN CATTLE (IMPORTATION).—Petition from Liverpool, for alteration of Law; to lie upon the Table 1068

LOCAL AUTHORITIES (QUALIFICATION OF WOMEN) BILL.—Petition from Leicester, in favour; to lie upon the Table 1069

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (SCOTLAND) ACT, (1894).—Petition of the Scottish Poor Law Medical Officers' Association, for alteration of Law; to lie upon the Table .. 1069

PUBLIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS (RELIGIOUS TEACHING).—Petitions against alteration of Law; from Ballam; Bleasby; Bolton (two); Clitheroe; Colne; Eccles; Long Framlington; Oldham (three); Out Rawcliffe (two); Ribby with Wrea (two); Shaw; Stacksteads and Newchurch; Treales; Whalley; Wiswell; and Withington; to lie upon the Table 1069

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

HISTORICAL MANUSCRIPTS (ROYAL COMMISSION).—Copy presented, of Report on Franciscan Manuscripts preserved at the Convent, Merchant's Quay, Dublin [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 1069

EMIGRATION STATISTICS (IRELAND).—Copy presented, of Emigration Statistics of Ireland for the year 1905 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 1069

ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY (PENSIONS).—Copy presented, of Return showing the names of all constabulary officers now in receipt of pensions, of all head constables, sergeants, and constables, and of all widows and children to whom pensions have been granted since the Constabulary Estimate for 1905–6 was prepared, with the amount and date of pension in each case [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 1069

EDUCATION (SCOTLAND).—Copy presented, of Return showing the expenditure from the grant for public education in Scotland in the year 1905, with Statistics [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 1069

BIRTHS, DEATHS, MARRIAGES, AND VACCINATION (SCOTLAND).—Copy presented, of the fifty-first annual Report on the births, deaths, and marriages in Scotland for 1905, and forty-first annual Report on Vaccination [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 1070

BRITISH GUIANA.—Copy presented, of correspondence relating to disturbances in British Guiana [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 1070

PAPER LAID UPON THE TABLE BY THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE.—Bridlington Piers and Harbours.—Copy of Abstract of the general annual account for the year ending 26th July, 1905 [by Act] 1070

LABOURERS' COTTAGES (IRELAND).—Return ordered, "in respect of labourers' cottages in Ireland, showing (1) County; (2) Rural District; (3) Valuation of Rural District; (4) Number of labourers' cottages (*a*) built, (*b*) in course of construction; (5) Amount of loans (*a*) sanctioned, (*b*) received; (6) Amount required to be raised annually in repayment of loans sanctioned; (7) Amount which would be raised by the maximum rate of one shilling in the pound allowed for purposes of Acts; (8) Rate per pound required to raise amount specified in Column 6; (9) Present poundage rate levied on Rural District for Labourers Acts purposes; (10) Amount of Exchequer Contribution for the year ended the 31st day of March, 1906; (11) Amount of rent received from tenants of cottages and plots during year; (12) Unissued balance, if any, of County's share of Exchequer Contribution;

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(13) Totals per County and Province, and for all Ireland; (14) The Return to be made up to the 31st day of March, 1906 (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 188, of Session 1904)."—(*Mr. Flavin*) 1070

LABOURERS' COTTAGES (IRELAND).—Return ordered, "in respect to Labourers' Cottages in Ireland, showing the number of Cottages applied for in every Poor Law Union in Ireland under the latest completed Scheme in connection with the Labourers (Ireland) Acts, together with the number of applications for extra half-acres to Cottages already built under the Acts under said Scheme; how many of these applications for Cottages and extra half-acres were sanctioned; the amount of Expenses connected with such Scheme; and in what way applied. The Return to be made up to the 21st day of March, 1906."—(*Mr. Flavin*) 1070

ALIENS (NATURALISATION).—Address for "Return showing the names of all Aliens to whom Certificates of Naturalisation have been issued and whose Oaths of Allegiance have, between the 1st day of January, 1905, and the 31st day of December, 1905, been registered at the Home Office, giving the country and place of residence of the person naturalised, and including information as to any Aliens who have, during the same period, obtained Acts of Naturalisation from the Legislature (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 106, of Session 1905)."—(*Mr. Herbert Samuel*) 1071

PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS (EXPENSES).—Address for "Return of Charges made to Candidates at the General Election of 1906, in Great Britain and Ireland, by Returning Officers, specifying the total Expenses of each Candidate (both exclusive and inclusive of Returning Officers' Charges) delivered to the Returning Officers pursuant to the Corrupt and Illegal Practices Act, 1883, and the number of votes polled for each Candidate (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 352, of Session 1901)."—(*Mr. Lamont*) .. 1071

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

POSTAL PORTERS AND THE POST OFFICE WAGES COMMITTEE.—Question, Mr. Wiles (Islington, S.); Answer, Mr. Sydney Buxton 1071

TRAINING OF SUBALTERNS IN THE ROYAL MARINES.—Question, Mr. Bellairs (Lynn Regis); Answer, Mr. Edmund Robertson 1072

POST OFFICE NIGHT MESSENGERS—FULL PAY FOR SICK LEAVE—GOOD CONDUCT STRIPES.—Question, Mr. Yoxall (Nottingham, W.); Answer, Mr. Sydney Buxton 1072

THE CASE OF THOMAS REILLY, RURAL POSTMAN.—Question, Mr. Thomas Smyth (Leitrim, S.); Answer, Mr. Sydney Buxton 1073

POSTAL FACILITIES AT SOUTH PARK, REIGATE.—Question, Mr. Brodie (Surrey, Reigate); Answer, Mr. Sydney Buxton 1073

EXAMINATION FOR POST OFFICE MALE LEARNERS IN IRELAND.—Question, Mr. Kennedy (Cavan, W.); Answer, Mr. Sydney Buxton 1074

SOUTH AFRICAN MINES—RETURNS OF PERSONS EMPLOYED.—Question, Mr. Charles Hobhouse (Bristol, E.); Answer, Mr. Churchill 1074

NATIVE LABOUR IN NATAL.—Question, Mr. Stanley Wilson (Yorkshire, E.R., Holderness); Answer, Mr. Churchill 1075

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PENSIONS FROM THE CONSOLIDATED FUND PAID TO RETIRED OFFICIALS OF THE EXCHEQUER AND AUDIT DEPARTMENT.—Question, Mr. Field (Dublin, St. Patrick; Answer, Mr. McKenna 1075

DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC EDUCATION IN BENGAL.—Question, Mr. Hugh Law (Donegal, W.); Answer, Mr. Morley 1075

SALE OF THE ROSSCARBERY ESTATE.—Question, Mr. Edward Barry (Cork, County, S.); Answer, Mr. Bryce.. 1076

SALE OF THE MOUNT SHANNON ESTATE.—Question, Mr. O'Shaughnessy (Limerick, W.); Answer, Mr. Bryce 1076

RETURN OF LABOURERS' COTTAGES, IRELAND.—Questions, Mr. Flavin (Kerry, N.); Answers, Mr. Bryce.. 1077

WITHDRAWAL OF FLAX EXPERT AT DROMARA, COUNTY DOWN.—Question, Mr. MacVeagh (Down, S.); Answer, Mr. Bryce 1077

SALE OF THE O'HARA-TRENCH AND ASHTOWN PROPERTIES.—Question, Mr. John Roche (Galway, E.); Answer, Mr. Bryce.. 1078

SOLDIERS IN CIVIL PRISONS.—Question, Mr. Claude Hay (Shoreditch, Hoxton); Answer, Mr. Haldane 1079

REGULAR ADJUTANTS WITH VOLUNTEER REGIMENTS.—Question, Lord Willoughby de Eresby (Lincolnshire, Horncastle); Answer, Mr. Haldane .. 1079

ARMY CONTRACTS AND THE FAIR WAGES CLAUSE.—Question, Mr. T. F. Richards (Wolverhampton, W.); Answer, Mr. Haldane.. 1079

SUPPORT OF REGIMENTAL BANDS.—Question, Mr. Lea (St. Pancras, E.); Answer, Mr. Haldane 1080

COURTS MARTIAL IN THE 16TH LANCERS.—Question, Mr. Lea; Answer, Mr. Haldane 1080

COURT MARTIAL ON GUNNER H. FLANAGAN.—Questions, Mr. Claude Hay; Answers, Mr. Haldane 1081

BRUSSELS SUGAR CONVENTION REPORT.—Question, Mr. Harold Cox (Preston); Answer, Sir Edward Grey 1082

BRITISH AND FOREIGN SHAREHOLDERS OF SOUTH AFRICAN MINES.—Question, Sir Howard Vincent (Sheffield, Central); Answer, Mr. Churchill 1083

ROYAL ENGINEERS IN ORDNANCE SURVEY.—Question, Mr. Bell (Derby); Answer, Sir Edward Strachey 1083

MINING MACHINERY IN THE TRANSVAAL.—Question, Sir Howard Vincent; Answer, Mr. Churchill 1084

ESTABLISHMENT OF A TELEGRAPH OFFICE AT JOHNSTON'S BRIDGE, COUNTY LEITRIM.—Question, Mr. Thomas Smyth; Answer, Mr. Sydney Buxton .. 1085

POSITION OF CLERKS TO SURVEYORS OF TAXES.—Question, Mr. MacVeagh; Answer, Mr. McKenna 1085

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THE ARREST OF WOMEN IN DOWNING STREET.—Question, Mr. Summerhill (Sunderland); Answer, Mr. Gladstone 1085

ADMINISTRATION OF THE ALIENS ACT.—Questions, Sir W. Evans Gordon (Tower Hamlets, Stepney), Sir Howard Vincent and Mr. Coates (Lewisham); Answers, Mr. Gladstone 1086

DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION IN BENGAL.—Question, Sir Thos. Esmonde (Wexford, N.); Answer, Mr. Morley 1087

CONDITION OF COURTOUN HARBOUR AND BLACKWATER, COUNTY WEXFORD.—Question, Sir Thos. Esmonde; Answer, Mr. Bryce 1088

COLONIALS AND ARMY COMMISSIONS.—Question, Mr. Harold Cox; Answer, Mr. Haldane 1088

COST OF THE BRITISH ARMY.—Question, Dr. Macnamara; Answer, Mr. Haldane 1089

STRENGTH OF THE BRITISH ARMY IN UNITED KINGDOM, SOUTH AFRICA AND BRITISH INDIA.—Question, Dr. Macnamara; Answer, Mr. Haldane.. .. 1090

RELATIVE COST PER HEAD OF THE POPULATION OF THE ARMY OF GREAT BRITAIN AND FOREIGN COUNTRIES.—Question, Dr. Macnamara; Answer, Mr. Haldane 1091

WAR OFFICE PURCHASE OF LAND IN ESSEX.—Question, Mr. Whitehead (Essex, S.E.); Answer, Mr. Haldane 1091

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

DOCKYARD LABOUR.—Question, Mr. Claude Hay (Shoreditch, Hoxton); Answer, The Secretary to the Admiralty (Mr. Edmund Robertson, Dundee) 1092

NAVAL VOLUNTEER OFFICERS' OUTFIT ALLOWANCE.—Question, Mr. Cathcart Wason (Orkney and Shetland); Answer, Mr. Edmund Robertson 1092

DEMERARA LABOUR TROUBLES —Questions, Mr. O'Grady (Leeds, E.) and Mr. Keir Hardie (Merthyr Tydvil); Answers, The Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies (Mr. Churchill, Manchester, N.W.) 1092

WOMEN FRANCHISE IN SOUTH AFRICA.—Question, Mr. Jowett (Bradford, W.); Answer, Mr. Churchill 1093

THE TRANSVAAL WAR CONTRIBUTION.—Question, Mr. T. F. Richards (Wolverhampton, W.) and Mr. Belloc (Salford, S.); Answer, Mr. Churchill 1093

THE SOUFFRIERE DISASTER.—Question, Mr. Mitchell-Thomson (Lancashire, N.W.); Answer, Mr. Churchill 1094

COLONIAL GOVERNMENTS AND CHINESE LABOUR.—Question, Mr. Walker (Leicestershire, Melton); Answer, Mr. Churchill 1095

PORT OF SPAIN MUNICIPAL COUNCIL.—Question, Mr. Lamont (Buteshire); Answer, Mr. Churchill 1095

IMPORT DUTIES IN MOROCCO—THE SPIRIT TRADE.—Question, Mr. Keir Hardie (Merthyr Tydvil); Answer, The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir Edward Grey, Northumberland, Berwick) 1096

BRITISH TRADE WITH SIBERIA.—Question, Mr. Fell (Great Yarmouth); Answer, Sir Edward Grey 1096

BRUSSELS SUGAR CONVENTION.—Questions, Sir Charles Dilke (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean) and Mr. Bowles (Lambeth, Norwood); Answers, Sir Edward Grey 1097

COMMERCIAL UNION BETWEEN SERVIA AND BULGARIA.—Question, Dr. Rutherford (Middlesex, Brentford); Answer, Sir Edward Grey 1097

FIFESHIRE MINE INSPECTION.—Question, Mr. J. Hope (Fifeshire, W.); Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Gladstone, Leeds, W.) 1098

FACTORY INSPECTORS' PROMOTIONS.—Question, Mr. Chiozza Money (Paddington, N.); Answer, Mr. Gladstone 1098

WAITERS' HOURS OF LABOUR.—Question, Mr. George Roberts (Norwich); Answer, Mr. Gladstone 1098

VIVISECTION.—Question, Mr. Soares (Devonshire, Barnstaple); Answer, Mr. Gladstone 1099

WISBECH VACCINATION CASES.—Questions, Mr. George White (Norfolk, N.W.) and Mr. Crooks (Woolwich); Answers, Mr. Gladstone 1099

RIVER WANDLE.—Question, Mr. Rose (Cambridgeshire, Newmarket); Answer, The Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Trade (Mr. Kearley, Devonport) 1100

PRIVATE BAGS IN POST OFFICES.—Question, Mr. Clough (Yorkshire, W.R., Skipton); Answer, The Postmaster-General (Mr. Sydney Buxton, Tower Hamlets, Poplar) 1101

PERFORATED STAMPS—DISHONEST POSTMASTERS.—Questions, Mr. T. L. Corbett (Down, S.) and Mr. Austen Chamberlain (Worcestershire, E.); Answers, Mr. Sydney Buxton 1101

CUSTOMS DEPARTMENT ABSTRACTOR CLERKS.—Question, Mr. Claude Hay; Answer, The Financial Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. McKenna, Monmouthshire, N.) 1102

TRADE UNION WAGES RATES IN GOVERNMENT CONTRACTS.—Questions, Mr. Austen Chamberlain; Answers, Mr. McKenna 1103

WHISKY PROSECUTION.—Question, Mr. Kilbride (Kildare, S.) Answer, Mr. McKenna 1104

GRADUATION OF INCOME TAX.—Questions, Mr. Samuel Evans (Glamorganshire, Mid) and Mr. Crooks; Answers, Mr. McKenna 1104

STATE PENSIONS.—Questions, Mr. Barnes (Glasgow, Blackfriars) and Mr. Crooks, Answers, Mr. McKenna 1105

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THE MALL IMPROVEMENT.—Question, Mr. Claude Hay: Answer, The First Commissioner of Works (Mr. Harcourt, Lancashire, Rossendale) 1105

NEW GOVERNMENT OFFICES IN PARLIAMENT STREET.—Question, Colonel Legge (St. George's, Hanover Square); Answer, Mr. Harcourt 1106

KING'S SCHOLARSHIP EXAMINATION.—Question, Mr. Boland (Kerry, S.); Answer, The President of the Board of Education (Mr. Birrell, Bristol, N.) .. 1106

IRISH LAND COMMISSION.—Question, Mr. Ginnell (Westmeath, N.); Answer, The Attorney-General for Ireland (Mr. Cherry, Liverpool, Exchange) .. 1107

MR. GARDINER, R.M.—Question, Mr. Duffy (Galway, S.); Answer, Mr. Cherry .. 1107

STUD HORSES IN IRELAND.—Questions, Mr. John O'Connor (Kildare, N.); Answers, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. Bryce, Aberdeen, S.) .. 1107

LAND COMMISSIONERS' PRACTICE.—Question, Mr. Ginnell; Answer, Mr. Bryce 1108

IRISH LAND PURCHASE LOANS.—Question, Mr. Murphy (Kerry, E.) and Mr. Kilbride; Answer, Mr. Bryce 1109

IRISH TRAINING COLLEGES.—Question, Mr. John Redmond (Waterford); Answer, Mr. Bryce 1110

QUEEN'S COLLEGE, BELFAST.—Questions, Mr. John Redmond and Mr. T. M. Healy (Louth, N.); Answers, Mr. McKenna 1111

EVICTED TENANTS ON THE CLANRICARDE ESTATE.—Question, Mr. John Roche (Galway, E.); Answer, Mr. Bryce 1112

FIRST TERM RENTS IN TIPPERARY.—Questions, Mr. Cullinan (Tipperary, S.) and Mr. T. M. Healy; Answers, Mr. Bryce 1113

UNTENANTED LANDS.—Question, Mr. Cullinan; Answer, Mr. Bryce 1114

GALWAY COUNTY RATE.—Question, Mr. Charles Devlin (Galway); Answer, Mr. Bryce 1114

GALWAY BAY BREAKWATER.—Question, Mr. Charles Devlin; Answer, Mr. Bryce 1115

IRISH SCHOOL REGULATIONS.—Question, Mr. Flynn (Cork, N.); Answer, Mr. Bryce 1115

IRISH PIERS AND HARBOURS.—Question, Mr. John O'Connor; Answer, Mr. Bryce 1116

RENT REDUCTIONS IN COUNTY LIMERICK.—Questions, Mr. O'Shaughnessy and Mr. Delany (Queen's County, Ossory); Answers, Mr. Bryce 1117

IRISH FISHERIES.—Question, Mr. John O'Connor; Answer, Mr. Bryce 1117

INCOME TAX ON IRISH LAND PURCHASE AGREEMENT.—Questions, Mr. Cogan (Wicklow, E.) and Mr. O'Shaughnessy; Answers, Mr. McKenna 1118

GALWAY POST OFFICE.—Question, Mr. Charles Devlin; Answer, Mr. Sydney Buxton 1119

KEELNABRACK (KERRY) NATIONAL SCHOOL.—Question, Mr. Boland (Kerry, S.); Answer, Mr. McKenna 1119

SOUTH AFRICAN CONSTITUTION.—Questions, Mr. Walrond (Devonshire, Tiverton); Answers, The Prime Minister and First Lord of the Treasury (Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman, Stirling Burghs) 1120

FICTION AND FOREIGN RELATIONS.—Question, Mr. Lehmann (Leicestershire, Market Harborough); Answer, Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman 1120

THE ORDER OF QUESTIONS.—Question, Mr. Swift MacNeill (Donegal, S.); Answer, Mr. Speaker 1121

One other Member took and subscribed the Oath.

Labour Pensions Bill.—Order for Second Reading To-morrow read, and discharged. Bill withdrawn 1121

Prevention of Corruption Bill [LORDS].—Read the first time; to be read a second time upon Thursday, and to be printed. [Bill 96] 1121

NEW BILLS.

Education Authorities (Access to Books and Documents) Bil—"To enable ratepayers to inspect the Books and Documents of Local Education Authorities," presented by Dr. Macnamara; supported by Mr. Winfrey, Mr. Cremer, Mr. Crooks, Mr. Thornton, Mr. Massie, Mr. Ellis Griffith, Mr. Ramsay Macdonald, Mr. Bridgeman. To be read a second time upon Thursday, 22nd March, and to be printed. [Bill 97] 1121

Market Gardeners' Compensation Bill.—"To remove certain doubts as to the meaning of the Market Gardeners' Compensation Act, 1895." Presented by Colonel Long, supported by Mr. Lee, Mr. Channing, and Sir Thomas Esmonde. To be read a second time upon Thursday, 22nd March, and to be printed. [Bill 98] 1122

Local Registration of Title (Ireland) Bill.—"To make provision with respect to the application of the Local Registration of Title (Ireland) Act, 1891, to the county of Cork." Presented by Mr. Attorney-General for Ireland. To be read a second time to-morrow, and to be printed. [Bill 99] 1122

Old-Age Pensions Bills.—Order for Second Reading upon Friday, 25th May, read, and discharged. Bill withdrawn 1122

Aged Pensioners' Bill.—Order for Second Reading upon Friday, 25th May, read, and discharged, Bill withdrawn 1122

SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES).—SIR WILLIAM BRAMPTON GURDON reported from the Committee of Selection: That they had nominated the following Fifteen Members to serve on the Standing Committee on Trade (including Agriculture and Fishing), Shipping, and Manufactures, in respect of the Land Tenure Bill. Mr. Agar-Robartes, Mr. Soares, Sir John Dickson-Poynder, Viscount Helmsley, Mr. Hicks Beach, Colonel Kenyon-Slaney,

Mr. Hay Morgan, Mr. Montagu, Mr. Munro Ferguson, Mr. J. F. Mason, Mr. Lloyd Morgan, Mr. Newnes, Mr. Nicholls, Viscount Turnour, and Mr. Luke White.

Report to lie upon the Table 1122

STANDING COMMITTEES (CHAIRMEN'S PANEL).—Mr. STUART WORTLEY reported from the Chairmen's Panel: That they had appointed Sir James Wodehouse to act as Chairman of the Standing Committee for the consideration of Bills relating to Law, and Courts of Justice, and Legal Procedure; and Mr. Stuart Wortley to act as Chairman of the Standing Committee for the consideration of Bills relating to Trade (including Agriculture and Fishing), Shipping, and Manufacturers, in respect to the Notice of Accidents Bill; and Sir Thomas Esmonde to act as Chairman of the Standing Committee on Trade (including Agriculture and Fishing), Shipping, and Manufactures, in respect to the Land Tenure Bill.

Mr. STUART WORTLEY further reported from the Chairmen's Panel: That they had agreed to the following Resolution:—That any Member of the Chairmen's Panel be and he is hereby empowered to ask any other Member of the Chairmen's Panel to take his place in case of necessity.

Reports to lie upon the Table 1123

STANDING ORDERS.—Resolutions reported from the Select Committee:

1. "That, in the case of the London County Council (Tramways and Improvements), Petition for Bill, the Standing Orders ought to be dispensed with:—That the parties be permitted to proceed with their Bill, provided that the powers to construct Tramways Nos. 4, 5, 6, 6A, 7, 7A, 7B, 7C, 8, 8A, 9, 17, 17A, 17B, 17C, and 20 be struck out of the Bill:—That the Committee on the Bill do report how far such Order has been complied with."

2. "That, in the case of the Middlesex County Council (Tramways), Petition for Bill, the Standing Orders ought to be dispensed with:—That the parties be permitted to proceed with their Bill."

3. "That, in the case of the London County Council (General Powers) Bill, Petition for dispensing with Standing Order 128 in the case of the Petition of 'Electrical Contractors' Association and others,' against the Bill, the said Standing Orders ought not to be dispensed with."

First two Resolutions agreed to.

Report to lie upon the Table 1123

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.—That they have passed a Bill, intituled, "An Act to codify the Law relating to Marine Insurance." [Marine Insurance Bill [Lords]. And, also a Bill, intituled, "An Act for the better Prevention of Corruption." [Prevention of Corruption Bill [Lords.] 1124

Marine Insurance Bill [LORDS].—Read the first time; to be read a second time upon Thursday, and to be printed. [Bill 95.] 1124

FREE TRADE.—Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [12th March], "That this House, recognising that in the recent General Election the people of the United Kingdom have demonstrated their unqualified

fidelity to the principles and practice of free trade, deems it right to record its determination to resist any proposal, whether by way of taxation upon foreign corn or of the creation of a general tariff upon foreign goods, to create in this country a system of protection."—(*Sir James Kitson.*)

Question again proposed.

Debate resumed.

Mr. Stuart Wortley (*Sheffield, Hallam*) 1124

Amendment proposed—
"In line 1, to leave out from the word 'House,' to the word 'deems,' in line 4."—(*Mr. Stuart Wortley.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

Mr. Paul (*Northampton*) 1130
Sir Francis Lowe (*Birmingham, Edgbaston*) 1136
Mr. Houston (*Liverpool, West Toxteth*) 1141
Mr. Samuel Roberts (*Sheffield, Ecclesall*) 1144
Mr. Stuart (*Sunderland*) 1146
Colonel Kenyon-Slaney (*Shropshire, Newport*) 1147
Mr. Bertram (*Hertfordshire, Hitchin*) 1144
Mr. A. J. Balfour (*City of London*) 1147
The Solicitor-General (*Sir William Robson, South Shields*) 1152
Mr. Keir Hardie (*Merthyr Tydvil*) 1155
Mr. Hunt (*Shropshire, Ludlow*) 1157

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 445; Noes, 118. (Division List No. 12.)

Main Question again proposed.

Mr. Wyndham (*Dover*) 1163

Prime Minister and First Lord of the Treasury (Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN, Stirling Burghs) rose in his place and claimed to move "That the Question be now put."

Motion made, and Question put, "That the Question be now put."

The House divided:—Ayes, 471; Noes, 123. (Division List No. 13.)

Main Question put accordingly.

The House divided:—Ayes, 474; Noes, 98. (Division List No. 14.)

Resolved, That this House, recognising that in the recent General Election the people of the United Kingdom have demonstrated their unqualified fidelity to the principles and practice of free trade, deems it right to record its determination to resist any proposal, whether by way of taxation upon foreign corn or of the creation of a general tariff upon foreign goods, to create in this country a system of protection.

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EVENING SITTING.

[Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER in the Chair.]

London County Buildings Bill.—Order for Second Reading read.

Colonel Legge (*St. George's, Hanover Square*) 1189
Sir Edwin Cornwall (*Bethnal Green, N.E.*) 1190
Sir Edward Clarke (*City of London*) 1192

Second Reading agreed to.

IRISH FISHING INDUSTRY.

Mr. Boland (*Kerry, S.*) 1193
Mr. Joyce (*Limerick*) 1196

Motion put, "That the condition of Irish fisheries is unsatisfactory and demands the early attention of the Government."—(*Mr. Boland.*)

Mr. Barrie (*Londonderry, N.*) 1199
Mr. Edward Barry (*Cork Co., S.*) 1201
Mr. Ffrench (*Wexford, S.*) 1203
Mr. Burdett Coutts (*Westminster*) 1204
Mr. Crean (*Cork, S.E.*) 1206
Mr. T. M. Healy (*Louth, N.*) 1207
The Chief Secretary for Ireland (*Mr. Bryce, Aberdeen, S.*) 1209
Sir Thomas Esmonde (*Wexford, N.*) 1215

Question put, and agreed to.

Resolved, "That the condition of the Irish Fisheries is unsatisfactory and demands the early attention of the Government."—(*Mr. Boland.*)

Adjourned at two minutes after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS: WEDNESDAY, 14TH MARCH, 1906.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Ascot District Gas (Electric Lighting) Bill (BY ORDER).—North East Lincolnshire Water Bill (by Order). Read a second time, and committed .. 1217

PETITIONS.

LAND VALUES (ASSESSMENT AND RATING) BILL.—Petition from Reigate, in favour; to lie upon the Table 1217

LIQUOR TRAFFIC LOCAL VETO (SCOTLAND) BILL.—Petition from Aberdeen, in favour; to lie upon the Table 1217

POST OFFICE TELEPHONES.—Petition from St. Albans against the erection of telephone poles in St. Peter's Street, St. Albans; to lie upon the Table .. 1217

PUBLIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS (RELIGIOUS TEACHING).—Petitions against alteration of Law: From East Retford; Gailey; Oldham; and Shaw; to lie upon the Table 1217

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

EAST INDIA (MINERAL CONCESSIONS).—Return [presented 9th March] to be printed. [No. 85] 1217

SUGAR.—Return ordered, "showing, with regard to London, Paris, and Berlin, the price of sugar and the duty levied thereon at the 1st day of March 1903, 1904, 1905, and 1906, on the lines of the Return, No. 174, of Session 1905."—(*Mr. Toulmin*) 1217

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

FALSIFICATION OF RECORDS BY ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT IN DUBLIN POST OFFICE.—Question, Mr. Delany (Queen's County, Ossory); Answer, Mr. Sydney Buxton 1218

REPAYMENTS OF LOANS UNDER THE BARRACKS AND MILITARY WORKS ACT.—Question, Mr. Harmood-Banner (Liverpool, Everton); Answer, Mr. Asquith 1218

CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETIES AND PAYMENT OF INCOME TAX.—Question, Sir Edward Sassoon (Hythe); Answer, Mr. Asquith 1219

COLONIAL AUDIT BRANCH APPOINTMENTS.—Question, Mr. Field (Dublin, St. Patrick); Answer, Mr. McKenna 1219

STRENGTH OF THE ARMY.—Question, Dr. Macnamara (Camberwell, N.); Answer, Mr. Haldane 1220

NAVY ESTIMATES—TABLE OF NEW GUNS.—Question, Mr. Bellairs (Lynn Regis); Answer, Mr. Edmund Robertson 1221

NAVAL OFFICERS—SPECIALISATION OF DUTIES.—Question, Mr. Bellairs; Answer, Mr. Edmund Robertson 1221

SUPPLY OF DRAFTS FOR REGIMENTS WITH BOTH BATTALIONS ABROAD.—Question, Mr. Courthope (Sussex, Rye); Answer, Mr. Haldane 1222

ENLISTMENT OF "SPECIALS."—Question, Mr. Nield (Middlesex, Ealing); Answer, Mr. Haldane 1222

MINIMUM WAGE OF LABOURERS IN GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS IN DUBLIN.—Question, Mr. Field; Answer, Mr. McKenna 1222

DISMISSAL OF JAMES MCKEOUGH OF DUNDRUM ASYLUM.—Question, Mr. Nannetti (Dublin, College Green); Answer, Mr. Bryce 1223

PROGRESS OF MARINE WORKS AT FALCHORRIB.—Question, Mr. Hugh Law (Donegal, W.); Answer, Mr. Bryce 1223

TENDERS FOR DRUGS FOR IRISH LOCAL AUTHORITIES—RECOUPMENT FOR LOCAL TAXATION ACCOUNTS.—Question, Mr. Field; Answer, Mr. Bryce 1224

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APPOINTMENTS HELD BY BALLYCASTLE PETTY SESSIONS CLERK.—Question, Mr. MacVeagh (Down, S.); Answer, Mr. Bryce 1225

MARINE WORKS AT WESTPORT HARBOUR.—Question, Dr. Ambrose (Mayo, W.); Answer, Mr. Bryce 1225

MAIN ROADS IN THE COUNTY OF ANTRIM.—Question, Mr. O'Neill (Antrim, Mid.); Answer, Mr. Bryce 1225

POLICE PROCESS SERVERS IN COUNTY DONEGAL.—Question, Mr. Swift MacNeill (Donegal, S.); Answer, Mr. Bryce 1226

AGRARIAN OUTRAGES AT GLENTIER AND DUNFANAGHY.—Question, Mr. Hugh Law; Answer, Mr. Bryce 1226

THE DISTURBANCES IN NATAL.—Question, Sir Brampton Gurdon (Norfolk, N.); Answer, Mr. Churchill 1227

MASSACRE BY TURKISH TROOPS.—Question, Mr. Gooch (Bath); Answer, Sir Edward Grey 1227

SATURDAY HALF-HOLIDAY IN GOVERNMENT OFFICES.—Question, Sir Howard Vincent (Sheffield, Central); Answer, Mr. McKenna 1227

SUPERANNUATION FOR TEMPORARY CIVIL ASSISTANTS IN ORDINANCE SURVEY BRANCH.—Question, Mr. Gibbs (Bristol, W.); Answer, Mr. McKenna .. 1229

ALIENS ACT—DISTURBED DISTRICTS.—Question, Mr. Burdett-Coutts (Westminster); Answer, Mr. Gladstone 1229

UNEMPLOYED BILL—DATE OF INTRODUCTION.—Question, Mr. Thorne (West Ham, S.); Answer, Mr. John Burns 1229

ETON DRAINAGE SCHEME—SANCTION OF LOAN.—Question, Mr. Herbert (Buckinghamshire, Wycombe); Answer, Mr. John Burns 1229

COST OF NAVAL CADETS AT OSBORNE.—Question, Mr. Bellairs; Answer, Mr. Edmund Robertson 1230

FREE MEALS FOR CHILDREN IN BERLIN SCHOOLS.—Question, Mr. Lewis Haslam (Monmouth Boroughs); Answer, Mr. Birrell 1230

ALTERATIONS IN THE TEMPLE OF BODH GAZA AT BEHAR.—Question, Mr. Boland (Kerry, S.); Answer, Mr. Morley 1230

SALE OF LIQUOR TO COOLIES ON INDIAN TEA PLANTATIONS.—Question, Mr. Herbert Roberts (Denbighshire, W.); Answer, Mr. Morley 1231

WAR OFFICE CLOTHING CONTRACTS—ALLEGED SWEATING.—Question, Mr. Thorne; Answer, Mr. Haldane 1232

ARMY CHARGES IN SOUTH AFRICA—COLONIAL CONTRIBUTIONS.—Question, Mr. Molteno (Dumfriesshire); Answer, Mr. Haldane 1232

GOVERNMENT GRANTS TO UNEMPLOYED DISTRESS COMMITTEES.—Question, Mr. Thorne; Answer, Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman 1233

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POOR LAW COMMISSION—REPRESENTATIVE OF IRISH MEDICAL PROFESSION.—Question, Mr. MacVeagh; Answer, Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman .. 1233

MACHINERY AND COST OF CONTESTED ELECTIONS TO FOREIGN LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLIES.—Question, Mr. Channing (Northamptonshire, E.); Answer, Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman 1233

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

RESERVE OF NAVAL GUNS.—Question, Mr. Bellairs (Lynn Regis); Answer, The Secretary to the Admiralty (Mr. Edmund Robertson, Dundee) 1234

NAVAL CADETS.—Questions, Mr. Bellairs and Mr. Courthope (Sussex, Rye); Answers, Mr. Edmund Robertson 1234

IRISH PRESS AND IRISH RECRUITING.—Question, Mr. Lonsdale (Armagh, Mid.); Answer, The Secretary of State for War (Mr. Haldane, Haddingtonshire) .. 1235

VOLUNTEER ENCAMPMENTS.—Question, Mr. Scott (Ashton-under-Lyne); Answer, Mr. Haldane 1235

IRELAND'S GARRISON.—Question, Mr. Vincent Kennedy (Cavan, W.); Answer, Mr. Haldane 1236

FREE HOLIDAY PASSAGES FOR SOLDIERS FROM INDIA.—Question, Sir Carne Rasch (Essex, Chelmsford); Answer, The Under-Secretary of State for India (Mr. John Ellis, Nottinghamshire, Rushcliffe) 1236

COLONIAL CONFERENCE.—Question, Mr. Lonsdale; Answer, The Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies (Mr. Churchill, Manchester, N.W.) .. 1237

FLOGGING OF CHINESE COOLIES—LORD MILNER'S ACTION.—Questions, Sir J. Jardine (Roxburghshire), Mr. Belloc (Salford, S.), Mr. Swift MacNeill (Donegal, S.). Mr. Mackarness (Berkshire, Newbury) and Mr. Ward (Stoke-on-Trent); Answers, Mr. Churchill 1237

LABOUR REGULATIONS.—Question, Mr. Harmood-Banner (Liverpool, Everton); Answer, Mr. Churchill 1239

WORKMEN'S COMPENSATION ACT—CHILD WORKERS.—Question, Mr. Chiozza-Money (Paddington, N.); Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Gladstone, Leeds, W.) 1239

ADMINISTRATION OF THE ALIENS ACT.—Questions, Mr. S. Collins (Lambeth, Kennington), Sir W. Evans-Gordon (Tower Hamlets, Stepney), Sir Gilbert Parker (Gravesend), and Mr. Claude Hay (Shoreditch, Hoxton); Answers, Mr. Gladstone 1239

ALIENS ACT—MAINTENANCE OF ALIENS.—Question, Mr. Claude Hay; Answer, Mr. Gladstone 1242

IMPORT OF BOUNTY-FED MALT.—Questions, Mr. Fell (Great Yarmouth); Answers, The President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Lloyd-George, Carnarvon Boroughs) 1242

EMPLOYMENT AND MANUFACTURED IMPORTS.—Question, Mr. Bowles (Lambeth, Norwood); Answer, Mr. Lloyd-George 1243

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Merchant Shipping Bill.—Question, Mr. H. H. Marks (Kent, Thanet); Answer, Mr. Lloyd-George 1243

Government Officials as Political Agents.—Question, Mr. Vivian (Birkenhead); Answer, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. John Burns, Battersea) 1244

Licensing and Welsh Disestablishment.—Question, Mr. D. A. Thomas (Merthyr Tydvil); Answer, Mr. Gladstone 1244

Langside (Glasgow) Postal Arrangements.—Question, Mr. Laidlaw (Renfrewshire, W.); Answer, The Postmaster-General (Mr. Sydney Buxton, Tower Hamlets, Poplar) 1245

Scottish Sub-Postmasters and their Holidays.—Question, Mr. Laidlaw; Answer, Mr. Sydney Buxton 1245

Rothesay Fishery Conferences.—Question, Mr. Lamont (Buteshire); Answer, The Secretary for Scotland (Mr. Sinclair, Forfarshire) 1246

Royal Irish Constabulary—Pension Regulations.—Question, Mr. O'Mara (Kilkenny, S.); Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. Bryce, Aberdeen, S.) 1246

Irish Judicial Rents.—Question, Mr. Ginnell (Westmeath, N.); Answer, Mr. Bryce 1247

Tenants' Improvements.—Question, Mr. Ginnell; Answer, Mr. Bryce 1247

Agrarian Crime in Galway.—Questions, Mr. Lonsdale and Mr. Duffy (Galway, S.); Answer, Mr. Bryce 1248

Irish Exports and Imports.—Question, Mr. O'Mara; Answer, Mr. Bryce .. 1249

Irish Industrial Schools.—Question, Mr. Sloan (Belfast, S.); Answer, Mr. Bryce 1249

Woman Inspector for Irish Industrial Schools.—Question, Mr. Sloan (Belfast, S.); Answer, Mr. Bryce 1249

Mrs. Hildyard's Estate, County Limerick.—Question, Mr. Lundon (Limerick, E.); Answer, Mr. Bryce 1249

St. Patrick's Day Celebrations.—Question, Mr. O'Mara; Answer, Mr. Bryce 1250

Value of Irish Crops.—Question, Mr. O'Mara; Answer, Mr. Bryce 1250

Irish Butter Production.—Question, Mr. O'Mara; Answer, Mr. Bryce .. 1251

Appointments of Teachers to Irish Schools.—Question, Sir Edward Carson (Dublin University); Answer, Mr. Bryce 1251

Religious Instruction in Irish Elementary Schools.—Question, Sir Edward Carson; Answer, Mr. Bryce 1251

Irish Land Purchase—Trustees' Investments.—Question, Mr. Lonsdale; Answer, Mr. Bryce 1252

ROYAL UNIVERSITY OF IRELAND.—Questions, Mr. Lonsdale and Mr. Swift MacNeill; Answers, Mr. Bryce 1252

PROHIBITION OF CATTLE IMPORTS INTO THE UNITED KINGDOM.—Question, Mr. Lonsdale; Answer, Mr. Bryce 1254

LAMBERT'S MINORS ESTATE.—Question, Mr. Duffy; Answer, Mr. Bryce 1254

IRISH FARMERS AND CANADIAN CATTLE.—Question, Captain Craig (Down, E.); Answer, Mr. Bryce 1255

ELLIS ESTATE, COUNTY LIMERICK.—Questions, Mr. O'Shaughnessy (Limerick, W.); Answer, Mr. Bryce 1255

DONEGAL FISHING INDUSTRY.—Question, Mr. Swift MacNeill; Answer, Mr. Bryce 1256

GOODBODY ESTATE, ATHENRY.—Question Mr. Duffy; Answer, Mr. Bryce .. 1256

MONNERBAWN FARM, ATHENRY.—Questions, Mr. Duffy and Mr. Flavin (Kerry, N.); Answer, Mr. Bryce 1257

MARLFIELD NATIONAL SCHOOL, BELFAST.—Question Mr. Sloan; Answer, Mr. Bryce 1258

IRISH PRODUCE COMMISSIONERS IN ENGLAND.—Questions, Mr. Joyce (Limerick), Mr. Flynn (Cork N.) and Mr. O'Shaughnessy; Answers, Mr. Bryce .. 1259

BALLINCARRA SEWER LOAN.—Question, Mr. Joyce; Answer, Mr. Bryce .. 1260

ROXBOROUGH ROAD SCHOOL, LIMERICK.—Question, Mr. Joyce; Answer, The Attorney-General for Ireland (Mr. Cherry, Liverpool, Exchange) 1260

WEXFORD COUNTY COUNCIL AND CATTLE EXPORTS.—Question, Sir Thomas Esmonde (Wexford, N.); Mr. Sinclair 1261

PROTECTION OF IRISH CATTLE AGAINST DISEASE.—Question, Mr. Edward Barry (Cork County, S.); Answer, Mr. Sinclair 1261

IMPORTATION OF LIVE CATTLE FROM ABROAD.—Question, Mr. Londsale; Answer The Prime Minister and First Lord of the Treasury (Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman, Stirling Burghs) 1262

SPECULATION IN SOUTH AFRICAN STOCKS.—Question, Mr. Lonsdale; Answer, Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman 1262

INDENTURED LABOUR IN THE TRANSVAAL—NO ROYAL COMMISSION.—Question, Mr. J. Chamberlain (Birmingham, W.); Answer, Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman 1263

TRADE ADVERTISEMENTS AND BEAUTY SPOTS.—Question, Mr. Vincent Kennedy; Answer, Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman 1263

HOP CULTIVATION AND CHINESE LABOUR.—Question, Mr. Courthope; Answer, Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman 1263

CRIME OF CHINESE COOLIES IN SOUTH AFRICA.—Question, Mr. Mackarness (Berkshire, Newbury); Answer, Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman 1264

SEA EROSION.—Question, Mr. H. H. Marks; Answer, Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman 1265

VOTE ON ACCOUNT—THE ALIENS ACT.—Question, Sir W. Evans Gordon; Answer, Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman 1265

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.—Questions, Mr. A. J. Balfour (City of London), and Mr. Austen Chamberlain (Worcestershire, E.); Answers, Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman 1265

NEW BILLS.

Coroners Bill.—" To dispense with the compulsory viewing of bodies on the holding of Coroners' Inquests," presented by Mr. Luke White; supported by Mr. Bramsdon, Hr. John Wilson, Mr. Cameron, Mr, Toulmin, Mr. Arthur Henderson, and Mr. Summerbell; to be read a second time upon Wednesday next, and to be printed. [Bill 100.] 1266

Chartered Societies Bill.—" To provide for the further protection of Chartered Societies," presented by Mr. Harmood-Banner; supported by Sir James Woodhouse and Mr. John Henderson; to be read a second time upon Thursday, March 22nd, and to be printed. [Bill 101.] 1266

SUPPLY [MARCH 5TH] REPORT.

Resolution reported.

CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS ESTIMATES, 1906–7. (VOTE ON ACCOUNT.)—" That a sum, not exceeding £21,410,000, be granted to His Majesty on account, for or towards defraying the charges for the following Civil Services and Revenue Departments for the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1907, viz.:—

CIVIL SERVICES.

CLASS II.

United Kingdom and England:—

	£
Home Office - - - - - - - - -	66,000

CLASS V.

Diplomatic and Consular Services - - - - -	250,000

CLASS II.

United Kingdom and England:—

Local Government Board - - - - - -	86,000

CLASS I.

	£
Royal Palaces	20,000
Osborne	8,000
Royal Parks and Pleasure Gardens	45,000
Houses of Parliament Buildings	20,000
Miscellaneous Legal Buildings, Great Britain	30,000
Art and Science Buildings, Great Britain	25,000
Diplomatic and Consular Buildings	54,000
Revenue Buildings	196,000
Public Buildings, Great Britain	200,000
Surveys of the United Kingdom	90,000
Harbours under the Board of Trade	6,000
Peterhead Harbour	10,000
Rates on Government Property	295,000
Public Works and Buildings, Ireland	110,000
Railways, Ireland	35,000

CLASS II.

United Kingdom and England :—

House of Lords Offices	7,000
House of Commons Offices	15,000
Treasury and Subordinate Departments	40,000
Foreign Office	24,000
Colonial Office	25,000
Privy Council Office, etc.	4,000
Board of Trade	85,000
Mercantile Marine Services	32,000
Bankruptcy Department of the Board of Trade	3
Board of Agriculture and Fisheries	55,000
Charity Commission	15,000
Civil Service Commission	17,000
Exchequer and Audit Department	25,000
Friendly Societies Registry	3,000
Lunacy Commission	5,000
Mint (including Coinage)	5
National Debt Office	6,000
Public Record Office	10,000
Public Works Loan Commission	1,000
Registrar-General's Office	15,000
Stationery and Printing	330,000
Woods, Forests, etc., Office of	8,000
Works and Public Buildings, Office of	34,000
Secret Service	40,000

Scotland :—

Secretary for Scotland, Office of	25,000
Fishery Board	5,000
Lunacy Commission	2,500
Registrar-General's Office	1,500
Local Government Board	5,000

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Ireland :—

	£
Lord-Lieutenant's Household	2,000
Chief Secretary for Ireland	12,000
Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction	80,000
Charitable Donations and Bequests Office	1,000
Local Government Board	25,000
Public Record Office	2,000
Public Works Office	16,000
Registrar-General's Office	5,000
Valuation and Boundary Survey	6,000

CLASS III.

United Kingdom and England :—

Law Charges	40,000
Miscellaneous Legal Expenses	28,000
Supreme Court of Judicature	140,000
Land Registry	18,000
County Courts	5
Police, England and Wales	13,000
Prisons, England and the Colonies	340,000
Reformatory and Industrial Schools, Great Britain	130,000
Broadmoor Criminal Lunatic Asylum	12,000

Scotland :—

Law Charges and Courts of Law	30,000
Register House, Edinburgh	15,000
Crofters Commission, Scotland	2,000
Prisons, Scotland	37,000

Ireland :—

Law Charges and Criminal Prosecutions	30,000
Supreme Court of Judicature and other Legal Departments	43,000
Land Commission	90,000
County Court Officers, etc.	45,000
Dublin Metropolitan Police	60,000
Royal Irish Constabulary	600,000
Prisons, Ireland	52,000
Reformatory and Industrial Schools	55,000
Dundrum Criminal Lunatic Asylum	4,000

CLASS IV.

United Kingdom and England :—

Board of Education	7,000,000
British Museum	70,000
National Gallery	10,000
National Portrait Gallery	3,000
Wallace Collection	3,000
Scientific Investigation, etc.	24,000
Universities and Colleges, Great Britain, and Intermediate Education, Wales	60,000

Scotland :—

	£
Public Education	850,000
National Gallery	5,000

Ireland :—

Public Education	760,000
Endowed Schools Commissioners	400
National Gallery	2,500
Queen's Colleges	2,500

Class V.

Colonial Services	370,000
Telegraph Subsidies and Pacific Cable	30,000
Cyprus (Grant in Aid)	27,000

Class VI.

Superannuation and Retired Allowances	300,000
Miscellaneous Charitable and other Allowances	1,150
Hospitals and Charities, Ireland	17,000
Savings Banks and Friendly Societies Deficiencies	

Class VII.

Temporary Commissions	20,000
Miscellaneous Expenses	10,437
Repayments to the Local Loans Fund	—
Ireland Development Grant	100,000
Total for Civil Services	£13,980,000

Revenue Departments.

Customs	350,000
Inland Revenue	830,000
Post Office	6,250,000
Total for Revenue Departments	£7,430,000
Grand Total	£21,410,000

Resolution read a second time.

Major Seely (*Liverpool, Abercromby*) 1270

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out '£21,410,000,' and to insert '£21,409,900.'"—(*Major Seely.*)

Question proposed, "That '£21,410,000' stand part of the Resolution."

The Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies (*Mr. Churchill, Manchester, N.W.*) .. 1273
Mr. A. J. Balfour (*City of London*) .. 1282
The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (*Sir Edward Grey, Northumberland, Berwick*) .. 1288
Mr. J. Chamberlain (*Birmingham, W.*) .. 1292
Mr. Ridsdale (*Brighton*) .. 1298
Mr. Walsh (*Lancashire, Ince*) .. 1300
Mr. Markham (*Notts, Mansfield*) .. 1305
Sir W. Evans Gordon (*Tower Hamlets, Stepney*) .. 1312
The Secretary of State for the Home Department (*Mr. Gladstone, Leeds, W.*) 1318
Sir Howard Vincent (*Sheffield, Central*) .. 1323
Mr. Levy (*Leicestershire, Loughborough*) .. 1325
Sir Edward Carson (*Dublin University*) .. 1326
Mr. Straus (*Tower Hamlets, Mile End*) .. 1327
Mr. Morton (*Sutherland*) .. 1329

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Resolution agreed to.

EVENING SITTING.

Old Age Pensions.

Mr. O'Grady (*Leeds, E.*) .. 1330
Mr. Grove (*Northamptonshire, S.*) .. 1333

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That, in the opinion of this House, a measure is urgently needed in order that out of funds provided by taxation provision can be made for the payment of a pension to all the aged subjects of His Majesty in the United Kingdom."—(*Mr. O'Grady.*)

The Chancellor of the Exchequer (*Mr. Asquith, Fifeshire, E.*) .. 1335
Mr. Arnold Forster (*Croydon*) .. 1341
Mr. Gooch (*Bath*) .. 1346
Mr. Samuel Roberts (*Sheffield, Ecclesall*) .. 1349
Mr. J. W. Wilson (*Worcestershire, N.*) .. 1350
Mr. E. Edwards (*Hanley*) .. 1352
Mr. Pike Pease (*Darlington*) .. 1354
The President of the Local Government Board (*Mr. John Burns, Battersea*) 1356
Major Anstruther-Gray (*St. Andrews Burghs*) .. 1361
Mr. Crooks (*Woolwich*) .. 1362
Mr. Lupton (*Lincolnshire, Sleaford*) .. 1363

Question put, and agreed to.

Resolved, "That in the opinion of this House, a measure is urgently needed in order that out of funds provided by taxation provision can be made for the payment of a pension to all the aged subjects of His Majesty in the United Kingdom."—(*Mr. O'Grady.*)

Pharmacy Bill—Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Debate arising.

Mr. Claude Hay (*Shoreditch, Hoxton*) 1364

And, it being Midnight, the debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed upon Tuesday next.

Adjourned at three minutes after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS: THURSDAY, 15TH MARCH, 1906.

Several Lords took the Oath.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

The LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House that the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the Certificates from the Examiners that the Standing Orders applicable to the following Bills have been complied with :—West Cumberland Electric Tramways [H.L.]; Alexandra (Newport and South Wales) Docks and Railway [H.L.].

The same were ordered to lie on the Table 1365

Manchester and Milford Railway Bill [H.L.].—A witness ordered to attend the Select Committee 1365

Kidderminster Gas Bill [H.L.].—Reported, with Amendments 1365

Wallis' Divorce Bill [H.L.].—Amendment reported (according to Order), and Bill to be read 3^a on Monday next 1365

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

TRADE REPORTS: ANNUAL SERIES.—No. 3537. Portugal (Trade of Oporto for the year 1905) 1365

JUDICIAL STATISTICS (ENGLAND AND WALES) 1904 (PART I. CRIMINAL STATISTICS). —Statistics relating to criminal proceedings, police, coroners, prisons, reformatory and industrial schools, and criminals lunatics, for the year 1904.

Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table 1365

Limited Partnerships Bill [H.L.]. [SECOND READING].—Order of the day for the Second Reading read.

Lord Avebury 1365

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2^a."—(*Lord Avebury*.)

Lord Faber 1367

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On Question, Bill read 2ª, and committed to a Committee of the whole House on Thursday next.

Naval Prize Bill [H.L.].—Prize Courts Bill [H.L.]; Judicature Bill [H.L.]; House in Committee (according to Order); Bills reported without amendment: Standing Committee negatived; and Bills to be read 3ª on Monday next .. 1369

Polling Districts (County Councils) Bill [H.L.].—Polling Arrangements (Parliamentary Boroughs) Bill [H.L.].—Read 3ᵃ (according to Order), and passed, and sent to the Commons 1369

HOUSE OF LORDS OFFICES.—First Report from the Select Committee considered (according to Order), and agreed to 1369

COMMITTEE OF SELECTION FOR THE STANDING COMMITTEE.

Report from, That the Committee have nominated the following Lords to serve as Chairmen of the Standing Committee: E. Spencer, E. Onslow, E. Camperdown, V. Cross, V. St. Aldwyn, L. Balfour, L. Burghclere.

Read, and ordered to lie on the Table 1369

STANDING COMMITTEE.—Report from the Committee of Chairmen of the Standing Committee, That they have appointed the Viscount Cross Chairman of the Standing Committee; read and ordered to lie on the Table 1369

House adjourned at a quarter before Five o'clock, till To-morrow, half-past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS: THURSDAY, 15TH MARCH, 1906.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS (STANDING ORDERS 66 AND 67 NOT COMPLIED WITH).

MR. SPEAKER, laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, referred on the First Reading thereof, Standing Orders 66 and 67 have not been complied with, viz.:—Cork City Railways and Works Bill.

Ordered, That the Report be referred to the Select Committee on Standing Orders 1370

Hampstead Garden Suburb Bill (BY ORDER).—Read a second time, and committed 1370

London, Brighton and South Coast Railway Bill (BY ORDER).—Second Reading deferred till Tuesday next (Evening Sitting) 1370

London County Council (Tramways and Improvements) Bill.—" To empower the London County Council to construct and work tramways in the counties of London and Middlesex; and to make street improvements and

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other works and acquire lands; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and ordered to be read a second time 1370

Middlesex County Council (Tramways) Bill.—"For empowering the County Council of Middlesex to construct a tramway in the Edgeware Road and to widen portions of that road; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and ordered to be read a second time 1370

PETITIONS.

SUTTON, SOUTHCOATES, AND DRYPOOL GAS BILL.—Petition for additional Provision; referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 1371

LIQUOR TRAFFIC LOCAL VETO (SCOTLAND) BILL.—Petition from Glasgow, in favour; to lie upon the Table 1371

LOCAL AUTHORITIES (QUALIFICATION OF WOMEN) BILL.—Petition from Huddersfield, in favour; to lie upon the Table 1371

PUBLIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS (RELIGIOUS TEACHING).—Petitions against alteration of Law; From Bacup; Croston (two); Cuddesdon; Doctor Lane; Failsworth; Garstang (two); Hawick; Kirkham; Knaresdale; Salford; Skelton; Stoke Albany; Treales; Wesham; Whitechapel (two); and Yeaveley (two); to lie upon the Table 1371

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUOR ON SUNDAY.—Petition from Lincoln, for prohibition; to lie upon the Table 1371

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.—That they have passed a Bill, intituled "An Act to alter the constitution of the Dover Harbour Board." [Dover Harbour Board Bill] [Lords] 1371

DOVER HARBOUR BOARD BILL [LORDS].—Read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 1371

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

JUDICIAL STATISTICS (ENGLAND AND WALES).—Copy presented, of Judicial Statistics, Part I., relating to Criminal Proceedings, Police, Coroners, Prisons, Reformatory and Industrial Schools, and Criminal Lunatics, for England and Wales for 1904 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 1371

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).—Copy presented, of Diplomatic and Consular Report, Annual Series, No. 3537 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table .. 1372

MAGISTRATES (SCOTLAND).—Return ordered, "of the number of Magistrates appointed in the different counties of Scotland, with their names, descriptions, and addresses from the date of the last Return in 1893 to the present time."—(*Mr. Eugene Wason*) 1372

PRICES OF EXPORTED COAL.—Return ordered, "giving the quantities of Coal exported from each of the principal ports in the United Kingdom in every quarterly period since the imposition of the Coal Duty in 1901, at prices not exceeding 5s.; above 5s., but not exceeding 6s.; above 6s., but not exceeding 7s.; above 7s., but not exceeding 8s.; and above 8s."—(*Mr. David Thomas*) 1372

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QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Church Tithes and Glebes.—Question, Mr. D. A. Thomas (Merthyr Tydvil); Answer, Mr. Gladstone 1372

Appointment of Provincial Clerk-in-Charge at Belfast Post Office.—Question, Mr. Sloan (Belfast, S.); Answer, Mr. Sydney Buxton 1373

Belfast Postmen's Duties.—Question, Mr. Sloan; Answer, Mr. Sydney Buxton 1373

Good Conduct Stripes for Post Office Night Messengers.—Question, Mr. Sloan; Answer, Mr. Sydney Buxton 1373

Ecclesiastical Commission and Surveyor's, Architect's and Legal Expenses.—Questions, Mr. Herbert Roberts (Denbighshire, W.); Answers, Mr. Stuart-Wortley 1374

Coastguards and Royal Marines—Number of Commissioned Officers and Musicians.—Question, Mr. Byles (Salford, N.); Answer, Mr. Edmund Robertson 1377

Grant of Land in Rhodesia to Sir John Willoughby.—Question, Mr. Conor O'Kelly (Mayo, N.); Answer, Mr. Churchill 1378

Prices of Wheat in Germany and the United Kingdom.—Question, Mr. Rendall (Gloucestershire, Thornbury); Answer, Mr. Lloyd-George 1378

Royal Commissions, Committees, etc.—Cost and Number.—Question, Mr. J. F. Mason (Windsor); Answer, Mr. McKenna 1379

Irish Expenditure.—Question, Mr. John O'Connor (Kildare, N.); Answer, Mr. McKenna 1380

Intimidation of Michael Fynn at Athenry.—Question, Mr. Lonsdale (Armagh, Mid.); Answer, Mr. Bryce 1381

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Sale of Irish Land Report.—Question, Mr. Murphy (Kerry, E.); Answer, Mr. Bryce 1382

Application of Tenants on the Morrogh Bernard Estate, County Kerry.—Question, Mr. Murphy; Answer, Mr. Bryce 1383

Sale of the Lauder Property at Clonfanlough, King's County.—Question, Mr. Reddy (King's County, Birr); Answer, Mr. Bryce 1383

Prosecution of Three Cavan Farmers.—Question, Mr. Vincent Kennedy (Cavan, W.); Answer, Mr. Bryce 1383

Irish Agricultural Department Inquiry.—Question, Mr. Delany (Queen's County, Ossory); Answer, Mr. Bryce 1384

Evicted Tenants on the Lewis Estate at Ballinagar.—Question, Mr. Duffy (Galway, S.); Answer, Mr. Bryce 1384

THE CASE OF P. M. M'DONNELL AT GURTEENREENY, COUNTY TIPPERARY.—Question, Mr. Kendal O'Brien (Tipperary, Mid); Answer, Mr. Bryce .. 1385

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ARMY—REGULATIONS FOR WEARING PLAIN CLOTHES.—Question, Mr. Randall; Answer, Mr. Haldane 1386

WAR OFFICE CONTRACTS AND FAIR WAGE RESOLUTION.—Question, Mr. Rowlands (Kent, Dartford); Answer, Mr. Haldane 1387

APPOINTMENT OF HIGHER DIVISION CLERKS AT THE WAR OFFICE.—Question, Sir Samuel Scott (Marylebone, W.); Answer, Mr. Haldane 1387

REGIMENTAL AND DISTRICT COMMANDS.—Question, Mr. Carlile (Hertfordshire, St. Albans); Answer, Mr. Haldane 1388

NAVAL CADETSHIPS FOR COLONIALS.—Question, Mr. Harold Cox (Preston); Answer, Mr. Edmund Robertson 1388

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NAVAL CADETS.—Question, Mr. Bramsdon (Portsmouth); Answer, Mr. Edmund Robertson 1389

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IRISH POSTAL OFFICIALS AND THE IRISH LANGUAGE.—Question, Mr. Field; Answer, Mr. Sydney Buxton 1390

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EAST RIDING OF CORK—DEFALCATIONS OF TRISTRAM CURRY.—Question, Mr. William O'Brien (Cork) and Mr. T. M. Healy (Louth, N.); Answers, The Attorney-General for Ireland (Mr. Cherry, Liverpool, Exchange) 1422

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PHŒNIX PARK, DUBLIN.—Question, Mr. T. M. Healy; Answer, Mr. McKenna 1432

QUEEN'S COLLEGE, BELFAST.—Question, Mr. T. M. Healy; Answer, Mr. McKenna 1432

IRISH FINANCIAL RELATIONS.—Question, Mr. John O'Connor (Kildare, N.); Answer, Mr. McKenna 1433

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EMIGRATION FROM PORT GALWAY.—Question, Mr. Charles Devlin (Galway); Answer, Mr. Lloyd-George 1435

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BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.—Questions, Mr. A. J. Balfour (City of London), Mr. Austen Chamberlain, Mr. Arnold-Forster (Croydon) and Mr. Wyndham (Dover); Answer, Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman 1436

NEW MEMBER SWORN.—Arthur Clavell Salter, esquire, K.C., for the County of Hants (Northern or Basingstoke Division) 1438

HOUSE OF COMMONS (PROCEDURE).—Ordered, That a Message be sent to the Lords to request that their Lordships will be pleased to give leave to the Viscount Selby to attend to be examined as a witness before the Select Committee on House of Commons (Procedure).—(*Sir Henry Fowler*) 1438

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NEW BILLS.

Local Authorities (Taxation and Purchase of Land) Bill.—" To provide for the Taxation and Purchase of Land by Local Authorities," presented by Dr. Macnamara ; supported by Mr. Bell, Mr. Broadhurst, Mr. Cremer, Mr. Crooks, Mr. Keir Hardie, Mr. Harwood, Mr. Levy, Mr. Shackleton, Mr. Harvey, Mr. John Robertson, and Mr. Snowden ; to be read a second time upon Thursday, 29th March, and to be printed. [Bill 102] 1438

Mines, Etc., (Nationalisation) Bill.—" To provide for the Nationalisation of Mines, Canals, Railways, and Tramways," presented by Mr. Thorne ; supported by Mr. Walsh, Mr. Seddon, Mr. John Williams, Mr. Clynes, Mr. Jowett, Mr. George Roberts, Mr. James Parker, and Mr. Hudson ; to be read a second time upon Friday, 27th April, and to be printed. [Bill 103] 1438

Housing of the Working Classes, Etc., Bill.—" To amend the Law relating to the Housing of the Working Classes, to amend the Law of Rating, and to establish Fair Rent Courts," presented by Mr. Steadman ; supported by Mr. Alden, Mr. Bell, Mr. J. H. Bethell, Mr. Bowerman, Mr. Nannetti, Mr. John Johnson, Mr. Thorne, and Mr. Wiles ; to be read a second time upon Thursday, 5th April, and to be printed. [Bill 104] 1438

Leasehold Enfranchisement Bill—" To provide for the Enfranchisement of Leaseholds," presented by Mr. Maclean ; supported by Mr. Evans, Mr. Rowlands, Mr. Gooch, Mr. Simon, and Jenkins ; to be read a second time upon Thursday, 5th April, and to be printed. [Bill 105] 1439

SUPPLY [2ND ALLOTTED DAY.]

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. EMMOTT (Oldham) in the Chair.]

ARMY ESTIMATES 1906-7.—Motion made, and Question proposed, " That a number of Land Forces, not exceeding 204,100, all ranks, be maintained for Service of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland at home and Abroad, excluding His Majesty's Indian Possessions, during the year ending on 31st day of March, 1907."

Mr. Austen Chamberlain (*Worcestershire, E.*) 1439
Major Seely (*Liverpool, Abercromby*) 1441
Sir Charles Dilke (*Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean*) 1446

Motion made, and Question proposed, " That a number of Land Forces, not exceeding 194,100, all ranks, be maintained for the said service."—(*Major Seely.*)

Mr. A. J. Balfour (*City of London*) 1455
The Secretary of State for War (*Mr. Haldane, Haddingtonshire*) 1464
Lord Willoughby de Eresby (*Lincolnshire, Horncastle*) 1475
Lord Dalmeny (*Edinburgh, Midlothian*) 1478
Sir Howard Vincent (*Sheffield, Central*) 1481
Sir J. Dickson-Poynder (*Wiltshire, Chippenham*) 1483
Sir Carne Rasch (*Essex, Chelmsford*) 1486
Major Dunne (*Walsall*) 1487

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Col. Sandys (*Lancashire, Bootle*) 1488
Mr. Courtney Warner (*Staffordshire, Lichfield*) 1491
Mr. J. Ward (*Stoke-on-Trent*) 1492

And, it being half-past Seven of the clock, the Chairman left the Chair to make his Report to the House.

Committee report progress.

To sit again this evening.

EVENING SITTING.

Rathmines and Rathgar Extension and Improvement Bill (BY ORDER):—Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Mr. Clancy (*Dublin County, N.*) 1493
Mr. Field (*Dublin, St. Patrick*) 1496

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out the word 'now,' and at the end of the Question to add the words 'upon this day six months.'"—(*Mr. Clancy*).

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

Mr. James Campbell (*Dublin University*) 1498
Mr. T. M. Healy (*Louth, N.*) 1501
Sir Edward Carson (*Dublin University*) 1502
Mr. John Redmond (*Waterford*) 1504
Mr. Byles (*Salford, N.*) 1504

Question put:

The House divided:—Ayes, 73; Noes, 282. (Division List No. 15).

Words added.

Main Question as amended, put, and agreed to.

Second Reading put off for six months.

SUPPLY [2ND ALLOTTED DAY.]

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee).

[Mr. EMMOTT (Oldham) in the Chair.]

Army Estimates, 1906–7.—Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a number of Land Forces, not exceeding 204,100, all ranks, be maintained for the Service of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland at Home and abroad, excluding His Majesty's Indian Possessions, during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1907."

Whereupon Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a number of Land Forces, not exceeding 194,100, all ranks, be maintained for the said Service."—(*Major Seely*).

Mr. J. Ward .. 1507
Mr. Arnold-Forster (*Croydon*) .. 1510
Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman (*Stirling Burghs*) .. 1516
Mr. Guest (*Cardiff District*) .. 1521
Mr. Hunt (*Shropshire, Ludlow*) .. 1522
Major Seely .. 1523

Question put.

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 56 ; Noes, 296. (Division List No. 16).

Original Question put and agreed to.

And, it being after Midnight, the Chairman left the Chair to make his Report to the House.

Resolution to be reported upon Monday next ; Committee to sit again upon Monday next.

Sunday Trading.—Lords Message [12th March], communicating the following Resolution, "That it is desirable that a Joint Committee of both Houses be appointed to inquire into the subject of Sunday Trading," considered.

Resolved, That this House doth concur with the Lords in the said Resolution.

Message to the Lords to acquaint them therewith.—(*Mr. George Whiteley*) 1528

Adjourned at twenty minutes after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS: FRIDAY, 16TH MARCH, 1906.

The House met at Twelve of the Clock.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Heacham Water Bill.—To be read a second time upon Wednesday next .. 1529

Great North of Scotland Railway Order Confirmation Bill.—"To confirm a Provisional Order under The Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899, relating to the Great North of Scotland Railway," presented by Mr. Sinclair ; read the first time ; and ordered (under Section 9 of the Act) to be read a second time upon Monday, 26th March, and to be printed. [Bill 106] .. 1529

Todmorden Corporation Bill.—Reported from the Police and Sanitary Committe , with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed 1529

PETITIONS.

LAND VALUES (ASSESSMENT AND RATING BILL).—Petition from Hastings, in favour; to lie upon the Table 1529

PUBLIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS (RELIGIOUS TEACHING).—Petitions against alteration of Law; from Barton on Irwell; Blackburn (four); Bury (two); Church Kirk (two); Eastham; Finsthwaite; Granby (two); Halton West; Hampnett; Lower Darwen (four); Newchurch in Rossendale (two); Read; Road Hill; Royton; Stoke Row; and Weaverthorpe; to lie upon the Table 1529

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY.—Petition from Hinton Blewitt, and other places, for prohibition; to lie upon the Table 1529

UNEMPLOYED WORKMEN ACT, 1905.—Petition from Falkirk, for alteration of Law; to lie upon the Table 1530

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

PENAL SERVITUDE ACT, 1891.—Copy presented, of Regulation made by the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland under The Penal Servitude Act, 1891, Sections 8 and 9, for the taking of finger-prints and measuring and photographing prisoners [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 1530

METROPOLITAN CATTLE MARKET.—Accounts presented for the year 1905, with an account of extraordinary work executed other than the general repairs for the same period [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 1530

PENAL SERVITUDE ACTS (CONDITIONAL LICENCE).—Copy presented of a Licence to be at large granted to William Watson, to which are annexed conditions other than those contained in Schedule A of the Penal Servitude Act, 1864 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 1530

FACTORY AND WORKSHOP ACTS (DANGEROUS AND UNHEALTHY INDUSTRIES).—Copy presented of Regulations, dated 26th February, 1906, made by the Secretary of State for the Home Department, in pursuance of Section 79 of the Factory and Workshop Act, 1901, in respect of the processes of spinning and weaving flax and tow, and the processes incidental thereto [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 1530

LABOUR BUREAUX.—Copy ordered, "of the Report made to the President of the Local Government Board by Arthur Lowry, esquire, one of the inspectors of the Board."—(*Mr. Runciman*) 1530

LABOUR BUREAUX.—Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 16th March; *Mr. Runciman*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 86] .. 1530

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QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

DISFIGUREMENT OF ST. ALBAN'S BY TELEGRAPH POLES.—Question, Mr. Wiles (Islington, S.); Answer, Mr. Sydney Buxton 1531

CIVIL SERVICE EXAMINATIONS—SERVICE MARKS FOR POST OFFICE CLERKS.—Question, Mr. W. H. Davies (Bristol, S.); Answer, Mr. Sydney Buxton .. 1531

LETTER DESPATCHES AT MOUNTAIN ASH—Question, Mr. Keir-Hardie (Merthyr Tydvil); Answer, Mr. Sydney Buxton 1531

CHINESE LABOURERS—INSPECTORS OF THE CHINESE LANGUAGE.—Question, Sir Brampton Gurdon (Norfolk, S.); Answer, Mr. Churchill 1532

RAILWAY CONSTRUCTION IN BRITISH HONDURAS.—Question, Sir William Bull (Hammersmith); Answer, Mr. Churchill 1532

REGULATIONS FOR MOVEMENT OF SWINE.—Question, Mr. T. M. Healy (Louth, N.); Answer, Sir Edward Strachey 1533

LIABILITIES OF NON-PROVIDED SCHOOLS.—Question, Mr. Rawlinson (Cambridge University); Answer, Mr. Birrell 1533

VALUE OF NON-PROVIDED SCHOOLS.—Question, Mr. Rawlinson; Answer, Mr. Birrell 1534

RICHMOND PARK—HOURS OF OPENING.—Question, Mr. Cave (Surrey, Kingston); Answer, Mr. Harcourt 1534

SALARY OF ACTING PHYSICIAN TO YOUGHAL LUNATIC ASYLUM.—Question, Mr. Gilhooly (Cork County, W.); Answer, Mr. Bryce 1534

ANNUITIES EXPIRING DURING 1906-7.—Question, Mr. D. A. Thomas (Merthyr Tydvil); Answer, Mr. Asquith 1535

NOMINATION OF LAND TAX COMMISSION.—Question, Mr. Sears (Cheltenham); Answer, Mr. Asquith 1535

ADDITIONAL RAILWAY SIDINGS ON THE BURTONPORT RAILWAY.—Question, Mr. Law (Donegal, W.); Answer, Mr. McKenna 1536

EXAMINATION FOR CADETSHIP IN ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY.—Question, Mr. Sloan (Belfast, S.); Answer, Mr. Bryce 1537

ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY.—Question, Mr. Sloan; Answer, Mr. Bryce .. 1537

PROTESTANT CONSTABLES IN COUNTY TIPPERARY.—Question, Mr. Sloan; Answer, Mr. Bryce 1538

SUMMONS SERVER FOR WARRENPOINT DISTRICT, KILKEEL, COUNTY DOWN.—Question, Mr. McVeagh (Down, S.); Answer, Mr. Bryce 1538

PROMOTION OF IRISH NATIONAL SCHOOL TEACHERS.—Question, Mr. James O'Connor (Wicklow, W.); Answer, Mr. Bryce 1539

ARMY PENSION OF RICHARD MERRY.—Question, Mr. W. Benn (Tower Hamlets, St. George's); Answer, Mr. Haldane 1539

PROMOTION OF COLOUR-SERGEANTS TO THE PERMANENT STAFF.—Questions, Mr. Sloan; Answers, Mr. Haldane 1539

Pure Beer Bill.—Order for Second Reading read.

Mr. Courthope (Sussex, Rye) 1541
Mr. Barnard (Kidderminster) 1548

Motion made and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Courthope.*)

Sir Edward Sassoon (Hythe) 1551
Mr. Paul (Northampton) 1555

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out the word 'now,' and at the end of the Question to add the words 'upon this day six months.'"—(*Sir Edward Sassoon.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

Mr. Edmund Lamb (Herefordshire, Leominster) 1559
Mr. Rees (Montgomery Boroughs) 1562
Mr. William Rutherford (Liverpool, West Derby) 1563
Mr. Robert Price (Norfolk, E.) 1566
Mr. Charles Roberts (Lincoln) 1568
Colonel Kenyon-Slaney (Shropshire, Newport) 1569
The Financial Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. McKenna, Monmouthshire, N.) 1573
Mr. Belloc (Salford, S.) 1575
Mr. Everett (Suffolk, Woodbridge) 1576
Mr. Lupton (Lincolnshire, Sleaford) 1579

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 109; Noes, 164. (Division List No. 17.)

Words added.

Main Question, as amended, put, and agreed to. Second Reading put off for six months.

Parliamentary Elections (Disqualification Removal) Bill.—Order for Second Reading read.

Mr. Marnham (Surrey, Chertsey) 1584
Mr. Havelock Wilson (Middlesbrough) 1586

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Motion made and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Mr. C. Duncan (Barrow-in-Furness) 1586
Mr. G. Croydon Marks (Cornwall, Launceston) 1586
Sir Francis Powell (Wigan) 1587

And it being Half-past Five of the Clock, the Debate stood adjourned.

Whereupon Mr. SPEAKER, in pursuance of Standing Order No. 3, adjourned the House without Question put.

Adjourned at twenty-eight minutes before Six o'clock till Monday next.

END OF TABLE OF CONTENTS TO VOL. CLIII.

VOLUME CLIII.

ERRATUM.

In Column 442, Mr. CHURCHILL'S Answer to Sir J. DICKSON-POYNDER should read as follows :—I regret to say that it is impossible within the limits of a Question to answer the hon. Member's queries in detail. The last Reports on the subject of Land Settlement which have been published to Parliament will be found in Cd. 2482 and Cd. 2563, and I shall be happy to send the later Reports for the year ended 30th June, 1905, to the hon. Member for his perusal. Up to 30th June, 1905, about £2,200,000 had been expended on Land Settlement in the Transvaal and Orange River Colony out of the Guaranteed Loan. The amount of land acquired in the Orange River Colony is over 1,000,000 acres at a cost of £850,000, and about 700 heads of families have been settled on land under the Government. In the Transvaal about 600 settlers have been established under the Settlers' Ordinance : nearly 1,000,000 acres have been purchased at a cost of about £500,000. The hon. Member will, therefore, see that the matter has engaged the serious and benevolent attention of the Administration of the two Colonies, but the result has not so far been as satisfactory as could have been desired. Settlers require considerable capital and there have been several bad seasons recently.

THE

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

(*AUTHORISED EDITION*)

IN THE

FIRST SESSION OF THE *TWENTY-EIGHTH PARLIAMENT* OF THE UNITED
KINGDOM OF *GREAT BRITAIN* AND *IRELAND*, APPOINTED TO MEET
THE THIRTEENTH DAY OF FEBRUARY IN THE SIXTH YEAR OF THE
REIGN OF

HIS MAJESTY KING EDWARD VII.

SECOND VOLUME OF SESSION 1906.

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Monday, *5th March*, 1906.

VISCOUNT FERRARD.

Ordered, That the Report of the Lord Chancellor of the United Kingdom, made to the House of Lords on Thursday last, that the right of the Viscount Ferrard to vote at the elections of Representative Peers for Ireland has been established to his satisfaction, be sent to the Clerk of the Crown in Ireland, together with a certificate stating that such Report has been made, and that the House has ordered it to be sent to the said Clerk of the Crown in Ireland.

Several Lords—Took the Oath.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

West Cumberland Electric Tramways Bill [H.L.]; Presented; read 1^{a}; and Referred to the Examiners.

The LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House, That the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the Certificates from the Examiners that the further Standing Orders applicable to the following Bills have been complied with: Antofagasta (Chili) and Bolivia Railway [H.L.]; Bombay, Baroda, and Central India Railway (Purchase) [H.L.]; Bridgewater Canals [H.L.]; Crystal Palace Company [H.L.]; Essex and Suffolk Equitable Insurance Society [H.L.]; Folkestone and District Electricity Supply [H.L.]; Great Central and Lancashire, Derbyshire, and East Coast Railways [H.L.]; Great Northern Railway (Ireland) [H.L.]; Havana United Railways and Regla Warehouses [H.L.]; Holyhead Water [H.L.]; H. R. Baines and Company [H.L.]; Hull and Barnsley and Great Central Railway Companies [H.L.]; Hull and Barnsley Railway (Steam Vessels) [H.L.]; Hull Joint Dock [H.L.]; Kidderminster Gas [H.L.]; London and North Western Railway [H.L.]; Manchester and Milford Railway [H.L.]; Maryport Harbour [H.L.]; Mersey Railway [H.L.]; Milford Docks

[H.L.]; Mirfield Gas [H.L.]; National Assurance Company of Ireland and Yorkshire Fire and Life Insurance Company [H.L.]; Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire Tramways [H.L.]; Sheffield Assay Office [H.L.]; Sheffield District Railway [H.L.]; South Eastern and London, Chatham, and Dover Railways [H.L.]; South Lancashire Tramways (Extension of Time) [H.L.]; Thames Deep Water Dock (Extension of Time) [H.L.]; Trent Navigation Company [H.L.]; Wirral Railway (Extension of Time) [H.L.]; Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway (Superannuation Fund) [H.L.]; Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway [H.L.]; Preston, Chorley, and Horwich Tramways [H.L.]; Crediton Lighting and Power [H.L.]; Cardiff Railway [H.L.]; Great Western and Rhymney Railway Companies [H.L.]

The same were ordered to lie on the Table.

Crystal Palace Company Bill [H.L.]. The Chairman of Committees informed the House that the opposition to the Bill was withdrawn.

Accrington District Gas and Water Board Bill [H.L.]; Read 2^a, and Committed; the Committee to be proposed by the Committee of Selection.

Bethnal Green Borough Council (Superannuation) Bill [H.L.]; Read 2^a, and Committed.

Bury Corporation Bill [H.L.]; Clacton Urban District Council Bill [H.L.]; Cumberland Electricity and Power Gas Bill [H.L.]; Read 2^a, and Committed; the Committees to be proposed by the Committee of Selection.

Dover Corporation Bill [H.L.]; Dover Harbour Board Bill [H.L.]; Dover Harbour (Works, etc.) Bill [H.L.]; Read 2^a, and Committed.

Fulwood Urban District Water Bill [H.L.]; Haslingden Corporation Bill [H.L.]; Read 2^a, and Committed; the Committees to be proposed by the Committee of Selection.

Mersey Docks and Harbour Board Bill [H.L.]; Read 2^a, and Committed; the Committee to be proposed by the Committee of Selection.

Nettlebed and District Commons (Preservation Bill) [H.L.]; Read 2^a, and Committed.

Newport Corporation Bill [H.L.]. Read 2^a, and Committed; the Committee to be proposed by the Committee of Selection.

Newtownards Urban District Council Bill [H.L.]; Read 2^a, and Committed.

Penllwyn Railway and Road Bill [H.L.]; Read 2^a, and Committed: the Committee to be proposed by the Committee of Selection.

Warboys (Union of Districts) Drainage Bill [H.L.]; Read 2^a, and Committed.

Western Valleys (Monmouthshire) Sewerage Board Bill [H.L.]; Wolstanton United Urban District Council Gas Bill [H.L.]; Read 2^a, and Committed: the Committees to be proposed by the Committee of Selection.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

NAVY (NAVAL WORKS).

Memorandum showing the progress and expenditure on items included in the Naval Works Act.

TRADE REPORTS, ANNUAL SERIES.

No. 3532. Belgium (shipping and navigation of the Port of Antwerp for the year 1905).

CHURCH ESTATES COMMISSION.

Fifty-fifth Report from the Church Estates Commissioners, for the year preceding 1st March, 1906.

ECCLESIASTICAL COMMISSIONERS.

Fifty-eighth Report from the Ecclesiastical Commissioners for England, with an Appendix.

IRISH LAND COMMISSION (PROCEEDINGS).

Return for the month of January, 1906.

ARMY (ESTIMATES).

Memorandum of the Secretary of State relating to the Army Estimates for 1906–1907.

RUSSIA (NEW CUSTOMS TARIFF) (INTERIM STATEMENT).

Translation of the New Customs Tariff of Russia, as modified by commercial treaties with Germany and France.

STATISTICS.

Statistical Abstract for the British Empire in each year from 1890 to 1904. Second Number.

Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table.

PUBLIC RECORDS.

(Northern Circuit).—Schedule containing a list and particulars of classes of documents existing or accruing in the office of the Clerk of Assize of the Northern Circuit which are not considered of sufficient public value to justify their preservation in the Public Record Office.

(Board of Agriculture and Fisheries (Ordnance Survey)).—Schedule containing a list and particulars of a class of documents belonging to the office of the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries (Ordnance Survey Department) which is now in the Public Record Office but is not considered of sufficient public value to justify preservation therein.

UNIVERSITIES (SCOTLAND) ACT, 1889.

Annual Statistical Report by the University Court of the University of Aberdeen to the Secretary for Scotland under the provisions of Section 30 of the Universities (Scotland) Act, 1889, for the year 1904–1905.

Annual Report on the state of the Finances of the University of Aberdeen under the provisions of Section 30 of the Universities (Scotland) Act, 1889, for the year 1904–1905.

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table.

NEW BILLS.

POLLING DISTRICTS (COUNTY COUNCILS) BILL [H.L.] (No. 22).

A Bill to make further provision with respect to the arrangement of polling districts for the election of county councillors: and

POLLING ARRANGEMENTS (PARLIAMENTARY BOROUGHS) BILL [H.L.] (No. 23).

A Bill to amend the law relating to the arrangement of polling districts in Parliamentary boroughs:

Were presented by the Lord Monkswell; Read 1^{a}; to be printed; and to be Read 2^{a} on Monday next.

STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE.

Appointed: The Lords following, with the Chairman of Committees, were named of the Committee:

E. Crewe.
(*L. President.*)
D. Bedford.
D. Marlborough.
D. Northumberland.
M. Lansdowne.
M. Salisbury.
M. Bath.
E. Derby.
E. Denbigh.
E. Chesterfield.
E. Jersey.
E. Lauderdale.
E. Waldegrave.
E. Cadogan.
E. Howe.
E. Amherst.
E. Camperdown.
E. Dartrey.
E. Lytton.
E. Carrington.
V. Sidmouth.
V. Knutsford.
V. Churchill.
L. Zouche of Haryngworth.
L. Barnard.
L. Balfour.
L. Ribblesdale.
L. Colchester.
L. Poltimore.
L. Kintore.
(*E. Kintore.*)
L. Belper.
L. Brougham and Vaux.
L. Kinnaird.
L. Hylton.
L. Fermanagh.
(*E. Erne.*)
L. Herries.
L. Monkswell.
L. Newton.
L. Welby.
L. Ludlow.

All petitions relating to the Standing Orders which shall be presented during the present session referred to the Committee unless otherwise ordered.

HOUSE OF LORDS OFFICES.

Select Committee appointed: the Lords following with the Lord Chancellor, the Lord President, the Lord Privy Seal, and the Chairman of Committees, were named of the Committee:

D. Northumberland.
M. Bath.
M. Cholmondeley.
M. Breadalbane.
E. Liverpool. (*L. Steward.*)
E. Clarendon.
E. Chesterfield
E. Waldegrave.
E. Spencer.
E. Mount Edgcumbe.
E. Belmore.
E. Cawdor.
E. Camperdown.
E. Cranbrook.
E. Ancaster.
E. Carrington.
E. Halsbury.
E. Plymouth.
V. Gordon. (*E. Aberdeen.*)
V. Hampden.
V. Cross.
V. Peel.
V. Knutsford.
V. Churchill.
L. Balfour.
L. Ribblesdale.
L. Colchester.
L. Rosebery. (*E. Rosebery.*)
L. Kintore. (*E. Kintore.*)
L. Belper.
L. Tweedmouth.
L. Monk Bretton.
L. Macnaghten.
L. Welby.
L. Burghclere.

COMMITTEE OF SELECTION.

The Lords following, viz.:

E. Waldegrave.
V. Churchill.
L. Ribblesdale.
L. Denman.

with the Chairman of Committees, were appointed a Committee to select and propose to the House the names of the five Lords to form a Select Committee for the consideration of each opposed Private Bill.

STANDING COMMITTEE.

Ordered, That a Standing Committee be appointed for the consideration of such Public Bills as may be committed to it by the House.

COMMITTEE OF SELECTION FOR THE STANDING COMMITTEE.

Appointed: The Lords following, with the Chairman of Committees, were named of the Committee:

E. Liverpool. (*L. Steward.*)
E. Jersey.
E. Waldegrave.
V. Churchill.
L. Balfour.
L. Ribblesdale.
L. Kintore. (*E. Kintore.*)
L. Lawrence.

CHINESE LABOUR.

THE DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH rose to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies "if he will lay upon the Table of the House a copy of the legal opinions upon which His Majesty's Ministers determined to stop the recruiting of Chinese coolies for labour in the Transvaal."

The noble Duke said: My Lords, I do not desire to detain your Lordships more than a few minutes in asking the noble Earl the Colonial Secretary the Questions which stand in my name. I need hardly remind the noble Earl that he undertook the administration of the Colonial Office early in the month of December, and the Parliamentary Papers which he has presented to this House show that on December 30th, only a fortnight after he had undertaken the administration of Colonial affairs, he decided to reverse entirely the policy of His Majesty's Government with regard to the importation of Chinese coolies. I wish to ask the noble Earl whether he can give the House the legal opinions upon which that very important decision, entirely reversing our policy, was based. Although I believe it is somewhat unusual to ask for the publication of legal opinions in such cases, yet it would be a source of great satisfaction if the noble Earl could give them to us in this case. It would be all the more interesting in view of the fact that the attitude of the Government was considerably modified from the first decision which they arrived at.

We now understand, from expressions of opinion by members of the Government in the other House of Parliament, that the existing contracts are not to be disallowed, but are to continue in existence and to hold good until 17th May, 1907. The noble Earl will, in reply, probably state that it is not usual to give the legal opinions upon which His Majesty's Government arrive at decisions. At the same time, it is wel within our memory that only last year in the House of Commons the Solicitor-General in the late Administration defended his action in giving advice with regard to the case of Adolf Beck, and I think that is sufficient precedent to show that on occasions His Majesty's Government have given the legal opinions upon which they have arrived at a definite decision of policy.

But there is one other question which I should like to put to the noble Earl the Colonial Secretary, arising out of this one. I have not included it in my Question on the Paper, and consequently I cannot press him for an answer, but if he could reply it would be a matter of great satisfaction to us. As the noble Earl informed us, there were some 16,000 licences granted between July and November, 1905. These licences will not expire, so far as we are aware, until the year 1908. According to the terms of the contract, the coolie's engagement does not commence until the date of his arrival on the Rand, and I gather that between now and even as late as May there will be several batches of coolies arriving. Consequently the last batch of coolies who arrive in May, 1906, will be indentured up to May, 1909. I should like to ask the noble Earl if he can inform the House whether their contracts will hold good up to the year 1909, or whether they will be broken by any action of His Majesty's Government. I do not desire to press this latter point too strongly upon the noble Earl, because, as I have already said, the Question is not included in the notice which I have placed on the Paper, but if he can give us an answer I shall be much obliged to him.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (The Earl of ELGIN): My Lords, I cannot help thinking that the noble Duke has put this question under a little misapprehension. It is evidently based on a telegram of January 5th to Lord Selborne, in which the phrase that he has quoted occurs—"the substance of which is concurred in by the legal advisers of the Crown." That, no doubt, is the origin of the noble Duke's Question, but that telegram, as will be seen on reference to it, referred, not to the act of the Government in suspending further licences, but to a difficulty—a legal difficulty—which had arisen as to whether we could revoke licences which had already been signed; and it was on that point, and that point only, that we said we had an opinion of the Attorney-General of the Transvaal, "the substance of which is concurred in by the legal advisers of the Crown." In another telegram in the same Paper the noble Duke will find what the opinion of the Attorney-General of the Transvaal was on that point, and the action of His Majesty's Government was to accept the opinion given by the Attorney-General. All that we meant by this expression was that after conference with our legal advisers in this country we were satisfied that that opinion was correct. It did not refer in the least to the act of His Majesty's Government in suspending further licences. That was an act of policy, and not an act on which any legal opinion had arisen.

The noble Duke is quite correct in saying that it is entirely contrary to practice that when a case is submitted to the Law Officers of the Crown their opinion should be published, and I do not think the fact that the Solicitor-General defended any particular decision in the House of Commons in any way deviates from that rule. But in this case, at any rate, we had no opinion from the Law Officers of the Crown which we can lay, and that is my answer on this point to the noble Duke. The noble Duke also asked a question, of which he did not give me notice, as to whether the latest batch of 16,000 licences will hold good until 1909. My answer off-hand, and without getting any information or advice on the subject, is that it is our hope and expectation that the reforms in the government of the Transvaal will be carried out in time to enable their decision to be taken on this question before 1909.

VISCOUNT RIDLEY rose to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies to grant a Return showing what petitions were received at the Colonial Office against the employment of Chinese labour in South Africa.

The noble Viscount said: My Lords, the Question which I desire to put to the noble Earl is somewhat of a similar character—namely, a desire for further information—to that which has just been submitted by the noble Duke, and perhaps I may be permitted to state, in a few words, the character of the information which I desire, and why I desire it. This House has been told before, in more than one debate, that certain indications of the opinion of responsible bodies in South Africa were in favour of Chinese labour or of some system of Chinese indentured labour. I need not repeat what has been said in previous debates, but I have made a careful study of the Blue-book recently issued, and I cannot find that there is any mention of responsible opinion expressed against the system which His Majesty's Government have now undertaken to condemn. On page 6 there is a report of a meeting at Petersstroem which was addressed by Mr. Creswell, whose opinions are well known; on page 17 appears a resolution passed by the Executive Committee of the Transvaal Political Labour League—the Executive Committee, not the representative body; and, thirdly, I find, on page 119, a resolution from the Cape Town branch of the Africander Bond, which in the main is not a resolution against the continuance of Chinese labour so much as a resolution in favour of the loyalty of the Africander Bond. Are those the only indications which have reached His Majesty's Government as regards the state of opinion in South Africa? If not, what opinions can they give us, and will they publish them? I think it is important that we should have some information of the reasons which have led the Government to come to their present decision on this matter.

I would desire to give the Government every credit which a party man can give. I would not desire unduly to attack them in a matter of Imperial administration, or to embarrass them more than is necessary; but I could not help being attracted by the speech of the Secretary of State for the Colonies when he quoted the famous despatch of Lord Durham and referred with justifiable pride to his family connection with the author. There is a passage in that despatch which I have no doubt the noble Earl has read. Lord Durham wrote—

> "Hitherto the course of policy adopted by the English Government in this Colony has had reference to the state of parties in England instead of the wants and the circumstances of the province."

I would desire further information upon this point, because I do not wish to be obliged to charge the Government with committing the error referred to in this despatch.

I do not think that, as regards the administration of our Empire, either Party can be said to be entirely free from blame. It has been perhaps a fault incidental to our party system that there have been cases when the needs and aspirations of the Colonies come into conflict with Party needs and aspirations at home. I venture to think that, so far as the information which we now have enables us to judge of the question, there is serious danger that these warnings of Lord Durham are at this moment being neglected. What, as we understand it, is the attitude to be adopted in regard to this important question so far as the wishes of the colonists themselves are concerned? They are to have responsible government, which is to decide the question, but they are not to be allowed to decide it as they would wish; and, meanwhile, we are kept in absolute ignorance of any new information, any fresh light, any new views thrown on the subject by those most concerned in South Africa. If it is wrong for a Conservative Government to interfere with the affairs of a colony, I venture to think it is trebly wrong for noble Lords opposite, who call themselves members of the Liberal Party, the Party which makes it a matter of pride to give self-government to the Colonies—I venture to say it is trebly wrong of them to interfere in the affairs of a colony as I understand they propose to do in this case.

I confess I am somewhat in a dilemma in this matter. It is difficult to gather what is the real intention of His Majesty's Government. So far as I can judge, there are two opposite schools of thought in the Party, and I do not know which school I am to follow, and consequently which arguments to adopt. Am I to adopt the line of thought so eloquently pleaded for by the noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack the other day, who remains of the opinion that this Ordinance is—or, shall I say, partakes—of the nature of slavery? Am I to adopt his school of thought, and then to ask when this iniquitous system is to end? I look for an answer, and I find it in the speech of the Chancellor of the Exchequer in another place. This iniquitous system,

Viscount Ridley.

which, in the opinion of many of your Lordships and a great many more outside the House who belong to the Liberal Party, is so near to slavery, to put it at the least, that it ought to be ended, is to be ended at the moment that a Transvaal Government asks to be allowed to continue it. Or am I to adopt the opposite view, the view of the noble Earl the Secretary of State for the Colonies, who disclaimed the other day all responsibility for the use of the term "slavery" in connection with the employment of Chinese coolies in South Africa?

According to many members of the Liberal Party, this system is not slavery. Well, what is the line of argument in that case? This system is not slavery, and you are going to hand it over to the Transvaal Government to be dealt with. Yet if the Transvaal Government ask to be allowed to pass this Ordinance, which you yourselves have said is not slavery, you are going to disallow it. Why? That is where I want more information, because, failing other things, I confess that this passage in Lord Durham's report frequently occurs to my mind. I do not like to charge noble Lords opposite, who, I know, have a high regard for the integrity of the Constitution, with thinking rather of their Party needs than of the good of the Colonies. After all, what do noble Lords opposite think has put them on those benches? What is the policy on which they have been returned?

LORD DENMAN: Free trade.

VISCOUNT RIDLEY: The noble Lord thinks that they have been returned to support the policy of absolute negation which, on the authority of the Duke of Devonshire, is a system we have not got, and other noble Lords think they were returned in order to pass Home Rule. I know that is the opinion of a great many Members in the other House. Was that the constructive policy put before the country? No, my Lords, the constructive policy which was put before the country at the last election, and which placed noble Lords on those benches opposite, was that of ending a system of what was termed Chinese slavery in South Africa; and now that the Government have got into power I am very glad they do not propose to go the length advocated by some of their followers in the country. I cannot help feeling that there are a great many noble Lords sitting on the Front Bench opposite who for that very reason—and I say it with the utmost respect, and without the slightest reflection upon their abilities—have no right to sit there. They are proposing legislation for which the people of the country did not return them. Their followers and their friends have been throughout the length and breadth of the land educating the country—their Minister of Education has, at any rate, succeeded in that—down to certain ideas about Chinese slavery, and telling the electors all sorts of things which we are now told constituted a "terminological inexactitude" or were "descriptive terms."

We all desire to see the British Empire conducted without any taint of slavery. Yet the friends of noble Lords opposite have been going from constituency to constituency telling men who do not have much opportunity of judging, that we on this side of the House are slave-drivers, and that our brother colonists in the Transvaal are men guilty of the most horrible crimes and the most evil treatment of those committed to their charge. I think the state of affairs is one which does demand more information than His Majesty's Government have given us before we can refrain from the temptation of making charges which I would not desire to make. After all, you condemn the system. What are you going to do to alter it? You are going to ask the British taxpayer to return these Chinese coolies home to their native country. I sincerely trust that the noble Earl is right when he expresses the belief that this offer will not be largely availed of; but if it is not largely availed of, what becomes of all the charges which have been made, and are still being made in some constituencies, as regards the treatment of these Chinese coolies? On the other hand, if that opportunity is largely availed of by the coolies, what becomes of all the economies of the Chancellor of the Exchequer? What becomes of his hope, as expressed to a deputation, that when he had made considerable remissions he would be able to consider old-age pensions? The fact is that not only is this doubtful course being pursued by His Majesty's Government, but it is being pursued in the absence of all information, and all endeavour, so far as we can gather, to collect information.

You have made these charges all over the country. I maintain that you are now in a position either to substantiate them and deserve those seats which you now occupy, or, if you cannot substantiate them, to be convicted of having obtained those seats—I will not say by false pretences, but on issues which are no longer to be the issues of your policy. I wish to say a few words on certain facts of the situation which seem to me to add to the need for information. I do not speak here for any particular section or any particular part of the community. I do not speak for the Rand magnates. I think they can very well take care of themselves. I do not speak for the Boers. I think noble Lords opposite can properly take care of them. But I do feel deeply concerned for the great masses of the community to whom my noble friend the Earl of Harrowby referred the other day—the small shareholders, not only in this country, but in France, Germany, and on the Continent generally, who are very deeply concerned in this question.

Noble Lords opposite, or certainly their friends in the country, seem to think that by pursuing this policy they are having a hit at what they term Randlords. They think they are going to damage Park Lane. I think they are mistaken. I think the small shareholders are the men who will be hit, and I will give one or two reasons why that seems to me to be so. Suppose the policy of repatriating the Chinaman and returning him to his native country is carried out to the full; suppose they do succeed—which I do not think they can—in obtaining white labour at even 10s. a day to take the place of Chinese labour, the cost would work out at something like 45s. a ton. How many mines in South Africa can make a profit when it costs them 45s. a ton to get out the ore? Seven only, and those seven mines—I could give the names if desired—are the very mines which are in the hands of the Park Lane magnates, if I may use the term. The other mines, whose production is not so rich as to enable them to work at the enhanced price, would have to dismiss their workmen, white and Kaffir, presumably, as well as Chinese, and those are the mines in the hands of the small shareholders. It is, therefore, I contend, the small shareholder who would suffer by such a policy.

There is just one other consideration I would refer to. I find in the report of the Transvaal Chamber of Mines that the demand for machinery which would be caused by the gradual increase in labour which South Africa asks for would amount to £12,000,000 worth in a very short space of time. That may or may not be an exaggeration, but there can be no doubt that there would be a great demand for machinery and stores if the Transvaal industry were allowed to progress at a reasonable rate. In supplying that machinery this country might reasonably be expected to take some share. I suppose that to noble Lords opposite, who refer with such satisfaction to the import and export returns of this country and who regard trade as in such a happy and prosperous condition that they are compelled to bring in a Bill to relieve the unemployed, it is not a matter of such great concern that we should be in a position to take advantage of these opportunities we have in South Africa; but I venture to think it is a matter of importance to this country that trade should be developed there and that we should have a large portion of the imports which would necessarily follow. These are some of the reasons why I ask for full information as to the precise facts upon which the noble Earl and his colleagues have founded their decision as expressed in the various utterances we have heard, and I trust we may be allowed to have the fullest information on the points I have asked in my question.

Lord COLERIDGE: My Lords, the House has listened to a speech which, I think, marks most clearly the distinction which is characteristic between the two sides of this House as to what real Imperialism means. Both parties in this House call themselves Imperialists, but, if I can judge from the speeches upon this question delivered to us by noble Lords opposite, their Imperialism is limited to the production of gold in a particular country by labour which is under servile conditions.

The noble Viscount wants information. Has the noble Viscount forgotten—he cannot have forgotten—that the policy which the late Government pursued was in flat contradiction of the expressed opinion of our great self-governing Colonies? Canada alone expressed no opinion, not because she had no opinion, but because she thought it was a matter in which she was not concerned. Australia, New Zealand, and, above all, Cape Colony—those three great Colonies to which we looked during the War, and from which we obtained most substantial and material aid—have again and again in reiterated language, as strong as any language that could be used, expressed their detestation of the introduction of Chinese labour under these conditions. There is no indication that they have in any way changed their opinion. Therefore, if the noble Viscount is, as I hope he is, and I am sure he believes he is, a true Imperialist, he cannot disregard altogether, and set aside as of no account, the opinions of these great self-governing communities. Then the noble Viscount seems, in his desire to look at the monetary side of the question, to disregard all other elements in the case. He says that, if so many mines are thrown out of working by the cessation of Chinese labour under these conditions, that is an overwhelming and conclusive argument for the continuance of this labour. That is not the view of those who sit on this side of the House, and it is not the view of the country. The noble Viscount seems to think that we have made charges in the country from which we are now receding. I should like to know what charge it is that we do not still entertain and press.

SEVERAL NOBLE LORDS: Slavery.

LORD COLERIDGE: Slavery! I see the noble Viscount, Lord Milner, in his place. The noble Viscount called every Outlander a helot. Dictionaries have been referred to, and if the noble Viscount will look at Webster's Dictionary he will find that helot means slave. I do not suppose that when the noble Viscount called the Outlanders helots he himself believed, or thought anyone else believed, that the Outlanders were helots in the sense that they could be bought and sold in the slave market. So, when the word slavery is used in connection with Chinese labour, the country knows perfectly well that the men are not bought and sold in the slave market. But they also know this: that they are denied access to the common law, which is one of the most prized possessions of every British subject, except through the leave and licence of an official, and that they were illegally flogged in the compounds, and illegally flogged by the sanction of the High Commissioner. That is quite enough to justify any one in describing their condition as that, not of freemen, but of semi-slavery.

The noble Viscount wants information. It is very difficult, let me tell him, to get really true information from the Transvaal. The noble Viscount must be well aware that Johannesburg is in the hands of a huge trust, a trust which is every day grasping within its purview more and more of the industries of that country; and that it has inevitably happened that every really free independent white man in Johannesburg has had to quit the country if he did not fall in with the views of the great mining magnates. It seems to me this question should be decided on higher considerations than on the mere question of whether or not so much money can be obtained for the shareholders. I see the noble Lord who spoke so eloquently the other night on behalf of the shareholders (Lord Harris) in his place. I would point out that the shareholders in the noble Lord's mines, as well as other mines, are already in the position of highly-favoured subjects. The noble Lord's mines promised to contribute £1,000,000 towards the £30,000,000 that were to come from the Transvaal. The noble Lord is not asked, and, as I understand, it is doubtful whether he ever will be asked, to contribute a penny of that £1,000,000, and therefore the shareholders for whom noble Lords so eloquently plead are not persons who are being maltreated by the Executive

Government of the day, but persons in receipt of very great favours.

After all, this question ought, as I say, to be considered on higher grounds than these. It is very easy for one Government to make contracts which are condemned by the Opposition, and then to twit the Opposition when they come into power because they are unable legally to break those contracts. It is an argument easy to use, but it is one which will deceive no one; and I venture to think that, so far from the country having receded from its position, it is only impatient at what it considers to be the hesitation of the Government. It is true that the evil men do lives after them, and this Government have to maintain the contracts entered into by their predecessors, and are only able to arrive by the process of a side wind at the object they desire. If, as the noble Viscount is so persuaded, the Chinaman is one of the happiest men in the world, he will not wish to break his contract and return to his native country, and the shareholders for whom the noble Viscount pleaded would have no shortage of Chinese labour. The very fact that he seems so alarmed at the prospect of a diminution in this labour seems to me to indicate a suspicion in his mind that when the coolies are asked whether they wish to return they will express that desire in very large numbers. I hope that the noble Earl the Secretary of State, when he answers the Questions put to him by the noble Viscount, will not content himself with speaking of the opinions of the dwellers in the Transvaal at this moment, but will look to the larger interests of the country and the Empire, not overlooking the opinion of our great self-governing colonies.

*Lord HARRIS: My Lords, I had intended, under any circumstances, to ask your Lordships to favour me with a few moments, even if the noble and learned lords opposite had not challenged me on one or two particular points. The mention of the name of Mr. Creswell by my noble friend Viscount Ridley gives me an opportunity of correcting a statement which I made the other night, and which has been challenged in a letter by Mr. Monypenny in *The Times*. From the statement I made it might have been inferred that Mr. Creswell resigned from the management of the mine known as the Village Main Reef Mine during an experiment which he was conducting with a very large proportion of white unskilled labour, and that his resignation was due to the Board of that company having deemed the experiment a failure. I was incorrect in the time when Mr. Creswell resigned. He resigned during the course of the experiment, and not in consequence of any dissatisfaction on that point of his Board, and I take this opportunity of expressing my regret to Mr. Creswell that I made that misstatement. But it does not affect the argument I was elaborating, which was that the experiment was initiated by Mr. Creswell and proved to be a failure; that it was condemned by the Board after reports from engineers of a superior grade to Mr. Creswell, and that Mr. Creswell ever since then has had a grievance which he argued at considerable length in the Johannesburg Press. I take this opportunity, however, of expressing my regret that my statement on that particular point was not quite accurate. The noble and learned Lord opposite stated that the particular company with which I am associated promised to pay £1,000,000.

Lord COLERIDGE: Guaranteed.

*Lord HARRIS: Yes, it is a very different thing. What exactly happened was this: Mr. Chamberlain when in South Africa arranged with his colleagues at home that a loan of £35,000,000 should be made to the Transvaal, and while the discussion on that point was going on it was suggested that another loan of £30,000,000 should be contracted by the Transvaal for the purpose of contributing towards the war debt in England, and the mining groups were asked what they would do in the way of assisting this loan. What they did was this: They said that if the loan was brought out at a time when markets were favourable they would guarantee the first £10,000,000. That was not a contribution to a debt; it was merely an investment by the companies who undertook to guarantee it. They would have had marketable securities guaranteed by the Government and easily saleable, and the groups would have bought the bonds and sold them in the same way as they would any other gilt-edged securities. There was never any guarantee that any one of these groups would make a donation towards a debt, and I should be glad if the noble Earl the Secretary of State for the Colonies, if not now, at some future time, would state what was the exact undertaking which the groups entered into, because there has been an entire misconception about this. I remember the noble Earl Lord Spencer last year dropping into a similar mistake and talking about a debt of £10,000,000. There was never any £10,000,000 debt mentioned in the discussions with Mr. Chamberlain out there, or in the communications between the houses and the Colonial Office here.

I understood the noble and learned Lord to say that he thought the noble Viscount and those who agreed with him laid too much stress upon the extraction of gold from the Rand mines, and thought that that was the only thing that was of importance. If he wishes to put that idea into the mouths of those who are responsible in a great measure for the prosperity of the Transvaal I can assure him he is entirely mistaken. What we say is that gold mining is at the bottom of the whole economic system in South Africa; that the imports into those Colonies at present would to an enormous extent be absolutely impossible but for the extraction of the gold; in fact, that the gold and diamond mines in South Africa cause the greater part of the trade there, and that any activity in that country, agricultural or industrial, is in the greatest measure due to the gold-mining industry. Obviously, if the circulation of capital which the gold-mining creates is to cease there will be less activity and less employment in South Africa, and to that extent the country will suffer. That is the argument of those who are concerned in this great industry. You would inevitably see a diminution in business in South Africa if this industry is seriously checked.

I would ask the noble Earl the Secretary of State for the Colonies to as soon as he can relieve the anxiety of those who are concerned in this business. I hope he will tell us what the terms are to be under which the coolies are to be repatriated, because a great deal depends upon that. t is generally assumed that a large number of coolies would not take advantage of this offer, but we are in a state of great anxiety as to what is going to happen on that point. It materially affects the operation of very many companies. If I may go into technicalities for a moment, may I explain what I mean? There are mines now for which the money was subscribed as long ago as 1898. Owing to the war and subsequently to the shortage of labour it was impossible to do work upon those mines. The money subscribed had been lying at interest, and to that extent the company had benefited; on the other hand, the unfortunate shareholders had had no interest on their money; but in consequence of the arrival of the Chinese those mines have been able to set to work, to get the water pumped out with which the shafts were filled during the war, to replace everything that had to be replaced owing to corrosion, rotting timbers, and so on, and then to proceed with what is technically termed development—the preparation of the workings for the ore to be extracted for the mill.

There are many mines which are now in a position to order the mills, and they are suddenly checked. They are put into grave doubt as to whether labour will be forthcoming. It is not unnatural that in those circumstances they should hesitate to order the necessary machinery. The noble Viscount stated just now that £12,000,000 was the amount that might be spent on mines that were ready for machinery. I think the figures are given in the report presented to Lord Selborne by the Chamber of Mines as something between £10,000,000 and £11,000,000. That expenditure is checked. It takes two years to erect a mill of, say, 200 stamps, and get it ready for working, and during those two years development is carried on so that the mill may start with two years development ahead. It is obvious that if the ordering of this plant is to be deferred for some length of time there is no occasion for the companies to go on with the development, and if they do not proceed it means the discharge of a considerable number of employees. I am perfectly certain of this, that sooner than do that the companies will continue to employ their full staffs for the longest time possible. They will put in all the work they can underground; but this matter is based on finance, and sooner or later, unless their hesitation is removed, they may have to come to the unfortunate decision to reduce their staffs. That means, as I suggested just now, lack of employment, lack of business, a diminution in the circulation of money in South Africa, and the inevitable suffering of the Colonies. I have placed some Questions on the Paper as regards the comparison between the Transvaal Ordinance and the British Guiana Ordinance. I do not think there will be any necessity for me to trouble the House by putting those Questions. The points are highly technical ones. I would ask the noble Earl to look very carefully into the Ordinance, and suggest in what points the Transvaal Ordinance can be made more like the British Guiana Ordinance, for I am perfectly certain that it would be possible for us to agree to the changes which the Colonial Office might think desirable.

LORD MONKSWELL: My Lords, as the whole question of servile labour has been raised, and as I intended to put a Question with regard to the reading of the Ordinance, I should like to say a few words now. I think that if I am permitted to make a short statement at this stage my Question to the Secretary of State which stands on the Paper need not be put. I find myself very much in the same position as my noble and learned friend Lord Coleridge. I have gone up and down the country talking about Free Trade, Chinese labour, and other matters. From the moment when my chairmanship of the London County Council came to an end in March, 1904—I make this statement, as it is the fashion to make confessions with regard to one's utterances on the platform—I have addressed some forty meetings from Dudley to Weymouth, and I have made very free use of the question of Chinese labour.

There is one matter that I have always put before the country in connection with the servile condition of this labour as applied to the Chinese. Very much to my surprise, about a year ago the noble Lord opposite (Lord Harris) told the House that the Chinese Labour Ordinance was so strictly construed that a Chinaman was not allowed to do his own gardening; he was not allowed to work in his garden and grow his own vegetables; he was not even allowed to grow a flower for his delectation. This is, in my opinion, a very degrading condition of labour. Indeed, I can hardly imagine any condition of labour more degrading. I can quite understand that His Majesty's Government may have the greatest possible difficulty in dealing with the question of the restriction of Chinese labour to mining work. Yet if a man is not allowed in his spare hours to do a little gardening, it only shows the abominably servile condition of this labour. I do not know whether you would call that slavery. For my part, I say it is worse than slavery, because a slave, after he has done his master's work, is allowed to work on his own patch. I do hope that, whatever difficulties the Secretary of State for the Colonies may have in settling the terms of this Ordinance, he will, at all events, never permit it to be said that under his guidance and direction a Chinaman, or anybody else under the British flag, was prohibited in his spare hours from doing a little gardening on his own account.

VISCOUNT HALIFAX: My Lords, if I may occupy the time of the House for a few moments I think I can contribute something to the point. One is unwilling to be always referring to one's own personal experience, but in the compound which I visited in South Africa I saw with my own eyes the gardens in which the Chinamen worked after their hours of labour. I do not know whether that was the case in all compounds; I can only speak of the one which I saw. I think the noble and learned Lord opposite has somewhat misrepresented the opinions of those who, like myself, support the action of the late Government in regard to this Chinese Ordinance. Speaking for myself, my Lords, though I desire to see full justice done to the mining industry, I support this Ordinance, not so much on account of the interests of the mining industry, as because the development of the mines is the key, not merely of the economic prosperity of South Africa, but of the political prosperity of that country and its security at the present time.

May I add one word as to the attitude which the noble and learned Lord opposite attributed to Cape Colony? It appears to me that the noble and learned Lord's statement amounted to no more than this: that the people of Cape Colony, like many others, were unwilling, in the first instance, that Chinese labour should be employed. Their attitude was not different from that of Mr. Chamberlain, but I should be surprised to learn that the objection is still entertained now that they have learned how necessary Chinese labour is, not merely for the welfare of the Transvaal, but of Cape Colony itself. I cannot give the exact reference, but not very long ago there was published a return of those in Cape Colony who were employing convict labour on their own farms. It is an interesting fact that among those who were employing convict labour in this way in Cape Colony were some—at all events one—who had spoken in most emphatic terms of the servile conditions under which the Chinese were employed in the Transvaal. If you come to servile conditions, I would ask which constitutes the greater servile condition—to employ in a compound, which in many cases is greater in area than some of the largest English parks, Chinamen within those limits of freedom, or to employ on your farm a batch of convicts, not chained, but who are not allowed out of the sight of a policeman, who watches over them with a loaded carbine? I cannot believe that those who employ such labour can be very sincere when they find fault with the conditions that obtain in the case of the Chinese. I am afraid it is a case of political arguments for political purposes.

Lord MONKSWELL: My Lords, on a point of personal explanation, might I be allowed to quote my authority for the statement I made? Lord Harris stated in your Lordship's House on February 27th, 1905—I am quoting from *Hansard*—that—

> "Quite recently I asked a colleague of mine who has returned from the Transvaal whether the Chinamen were allowed to do any gardening in the neighbourhood of the compounds, and my friend replied, 'Oh dear, no; there is such an amount of suspicion as to Chinamen doing work which is not allowed under the Ordinance that they are not permitted to do any gardening for themselves.'"

Lord HARRIS: I have no doubt it was quite true a year ago.

Lord MONKSWELL: I am very glad to find that it has been altered.

Viscount HALIFAX: The difference is quite clear. I was talking of gardening work within the compound, and Lord Harris, in the extract which has just been quoted, was referring to work outside the compound.

*The Earl of ELGIN: My Lords, I can assure the noble Lord opposite that there is nothing further from my wish than to deny him any information which he would desire to have. We have been told that we are too much in search of information, and I am glad to find that noble Lords opposite also desire to receive information. But the question which the noble Lord has put to me leaves me a little in doubt as to the nature of the information which he desires to receive. He asks for a return showing what petitions were received at the Colonial Office against the employment of Chinese labour in South Africa. In the first place, I should like to know what is included in the word "petitions." Does that mean petitions in the ordinary sense of the word, or would the noble Lord include resolutions of public meetings, memorials, and other documents of the kind?

Viscount RIDLEY: I meant to include them.

*The Earl of ELGIN: In the next place, I would like to know whether the noble Lord means information coming from South Africa or elsewhere. It will naturally occur to the noble Lord that I would only have documents forwarded to me officially from South Africa, and not resolutions which arise in this country. In the next place I would like to know within what dates the noble Lord requires this information. How far does he go back? Does he want the petitions which were sent to the last Government, or is it only during our tenure of office? I am informed, so far as official information from South Africa is concerned, that everything that has been sent to us in the nature of resolutions and otherwise has practically been included in the Blue-books which have been issued. I cannot quite see how I am to collect the information of the other kind of which I have spoken. Since we came into office I do not think that any information of this kind has reached us from South Africa; but I am informed that a year or two ago, at the time when this Ordinance was under preparation or was just being issued, there was a very remarkable influx of petitions of all kinds into the Colonial Office, but these, unfortunately, do not appear to have been preserved. I presume that they were addressed to the Secretary of State at the time, and that they have either been taken away with him as his private papers, or he did not consider them worth preservation. At any rate, I am afraid I am unable to supply anything from that source. At the same time, if the noble Lord will inform me afterwards of any way in which I can meet his wishes, I shall be only too glad to give him any return which it is in my power to give. I doubt, however, the value of anything we can give him beyond what has already been published.

In regard to what has been said in amplification of this Question, I would like, in the first place, to say that I do not admit that I separate myself from the view that there are conditions attached to the Ordinance which limit that right of free men which any man under the British flag ought to possess. Indeed, I thought I argued at some length that that was my view of the matter. With regard to the Ordinance itself, I should wish to add that I did quote certain provisions which, in my opinion, were contrary to common law. Two of those provisions I find have a place in the law of the Transvaal in application to other than Chinese coolies, but there is this difference—that, so far as they apply to whites, a white if he comes under them can, at any rate, take himself out of the country. A native also has this remedy, that he can desert, and desert effectually. I know he is liable to a penalty if he is caught for desertion, but something like 5 per cent. of the natives who desert make their desertion effectual and escape altogether. There is nothing of the sort in the case of the Chinaman. He cannot get across the seas. When I last spoke on this matter I coupled with my criticism of those two sections the section referring to compulsory repatriation, which, I think, lies at the very essence of the matter.

The noble Lord also spoke of the difficulties which he thought would arise in consequence of our announcement that we should reserve the right of veto with regard to the provisions of any Ordinance which the Transvaal Government should introduce, and to which we thought we could take exception. There seems to me a little misunderstanding on this matter. It is in some quarters supposed that the proposals which we have made, and which were described by my right hon. friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer in the other House, would leave a hiatus during the time between the cancellation of the existing Ordinance and the passing of the new Ordinance by the Transvaal Government. That was not the intention. What my right hon. friend's proposal came to was this, that there should be a date fixed at which the existing Ordinance would necessarily and naturally come to an end; but that date would be fixed at such a reasonable period of time as to allow the new Government to consider and to submit for the acceptance of His Majesty's Government the Ordinance under which they proposed to continue Chinese labour, provided always they did so resolve. I think the noble Lord will see that if that arrangement was fairly and squarely carried out there would be no difficulty of that kind.

I regret that the noble Lord should insist on attributing to us political motives in this matter. In speaking of our position with regard to the Constitution, I endeavoured to explain that, though we had thought it necessary to recall the Letters Patent now existing, we did not in doing so in any way prejudice the full and fair consideration of all the parts of the basis on which that Constitution was framed. I hold to what I then said. His Majesty's Government think it is necessary to consider various details with regard to those Letters Patent and other matters which might affect the Constitutions necessary for responsible government, and we wish time to gather the information which we think bears on these points. I entirely agree with my noble friend opposite that it is of great imporance that the time should be limited as much as possible, in the interests not only of the mining industry but of all the economic considerations bearing on the welfare of the Colony; and I can assure him that no effort on our part will be spared to carry out this arrangement as quickly as possible. But, my Lords, I venture also to say that we go into this examination in no sense whatever seeking alterations in the interests of any Party, and I do not think the noble Lord opposite was justified in imputing to us any desire to do so.

VISCOUNT RIDLEY: I am sorry to interrupt the noble Earl, but I was asking for information on this point because I was expressly anxious not to impute Party motives to the Government for the action they have taken.

*THE EARL OF ELGIN: The phrase which I think the noble Viscount used, was—

> "We know very well that noble Lords opposite will look after the Boers."

I maintain that we are endeavouring to legislate, we intend to legislate, for an integral part of the British Empire. All we want is to secure fair conditions for every portion of the population with whom we have to deal; and I do not admit that this object is in any way inconsistent with the proper maintenance of British rule or the integrity of the British Empire. I do not think I can undertake offhand to answer my noble friend opposite with regard to the undertakings that were entered into by certain gentlemen in the Transvaal as to the raising of a loan. All I would say is this, that what I think was generally understood was that the loan was to be so raised and so secured as to form some material relief to the burdens of the mother country.

I have also been asked questions with regard to the details of the repatriation scheme. That scheme is in course of being adjusted. You will easily understand that communications with South Africa are necessary before we can give our final decision, but I will undertake to lose no time in carrying out those communications. There is only one other matter to which the noble Earl referred, and on which perhaps I might say a word. I am obliged to him for not compelling me on another day to elaborate to the House the differences which we think we find in the Ordinance at present existing in the Transvaal and that which has existed for many years in British Guiana; but I would just say this on the matter. The idea of the Ordinance in British Guiana is essentially one rather of colonisation than of compulsory labour for a time only. A large number, as he well knows, of the Indian immigrants never go back to India; they remain in the Colony; and the conditions under which they there live were carefully looked into by an officer deputed by the Indian Government, who reported—

> "The immigration system of British Guiana stands as an example to all the world of British fairness, honesty, and organisation in the beneficial control of a humble and dependent race. I had opportunities of seeing the many means by which they are raised from the position of raw, ignorant coolies into that of comfortable, independent settlers."

If the noble Lord will give me any assistance in the consideration of provisions of an Ordinance which would result in the same being said of the coolies imported into the Transvaal, I am sure I should be exceedingly glad to meet him.

THE DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH: My Lords, I should like, on behalf of my noble friend the noble Viscount behind me, to explain to the noble Earl the Secretary of State for the Colonies that we join in the regret that the Question on the Paper was not more specifically worded. What we want to ascertain is this, whether the noble Earl has behind him the support of a majority of the people of the Transvaal in the policy which His Majesty's Government are pursuing, of reversing entirely the policy adopted by their predecessors. What was the accusation invariably brought by noble Lords opposite against the late

Government when this Ordinance came into force? It was stated time after time that the late Government had not got the people of the Transvaal behind them, that they had not got their support, and were forcing on them an Ordinance which the majority of the people did not wish to have. To-day, when we ask His Majesty's Government whether they can give us any information as to resolutions or petitions received by them against the Ordinance we are told by the noble and learned Lord opposite that South Africa is a difficult country to get any real truth from.

LORD COLERIDGE: I referred to the Transvaal. I did not say South Africa.

THE DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH: Well, we are dealing with the Transvaal at the present moment. I venture to think that when the noble and learned Lord sat on this side of the House and continually questioned me on the support that we received from the Transvaal, he would not have accepted as a reply the statement that we found great difficulty in getting accurate information from the Transvaal. When we passed this Ordinance we were twitted with not having a *referendum.* We reminded noble Lords opposite that Lord Milner had stated that a majority of the people of the Transvaal were in favour of this Ordinance. We pointed out that many thousands had signed a petition in its favour, that the Bishop of Pretoria favoured the proposal, that all the Free Churches had supported it, that the majority of the Johannesburg Town Council and the whole of the Legislative Council of the Transvaal were in favour of it, as well as the whole of the Chambers of Mines, and, I believe, every Chamber of Commerce in the Transvaal, while many other public bodies sent us petitions in its favour. We had, therefore, some ground for claiming that in introducing this Ordinance we had the majority of the people at our back. You now announce that you are going to reverse our policy. We ask from you, Have you got the same amount of support for the reversal of the policy as we had for its introduction? In this Parliamentary Paper there are only two references to this matter. There are ten or twelve pages from Mr. Creswell, whose views we know, and at the end of the Paper there is a reference to those who are not altogether in favour of the Chinese Ordinance. But these are the only testimonies which the noble Lord has at present granted to your Lordships against the Ordinance.

*THE EARL OF ELGIN: They are the only ones which I have received.

THE DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH: The noble Earl, inadvertently, almost cast a reflection on the late Colonial Secretary and myself. I can assure him that we were no parties to burning petitions against Chinese labour. Indeed, I have no recollection of our receiving any. But we on this side of the House thought that since the noble Earl and his colleagues had come into office they had in all probability received as many petitions against Chinese labour as we had received in its favour. We are pleased to hear that none has been received. We only ask that he will lay on the Table when he receives them any formal petitions sent to the Colonial Office against the policy which the late Government laid down with regard to Chinese labour.

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF AGRICULTURAL AND FISHERIES (Earl CARRINGTON): My Lords, I have to express my thanks to noble Lords opposite for initiating this debate, as it gives me an opportunity of answering the questions which were put to me by the noble Marquess opposite, Lord Londonderry, during the last discussion. The noble Marquess asked me whether I regretted what I said in 1904, and why I did not denounce the native compounds at Kimberley in 1891. In answer to the first question, I have to say that I do not regret, withdraw or apologise for any single word I have said on the Chinese question in this House or out of it. As to the second question, Kimberley is in Cape Colony. Cape Colony is a self-governing colony, and I was not a member of the legislative assembly of that Colony. It was impossible, therefore, for me to make a protest there, but as soon as I had an opportunity I did call the attention of the House to the terrible state in which I found the Kimberley compounds. I am glad to hear that the compounds and the treatment of the natives, and also of the Chinese, have very much improved, and I think we may take credit for a fair share of that improvement.

The noble Marquess the other evening asked the speaker who was to follow me whether he approved of the language used by the Prime Minister with regard to this question. He got his answer in the noble speech that was delivered by the Lord Chancellor, and, if I may be permitted to do so, I should like to supplement that answer. I happen to be the President of the National Liberal Club, which contains among its members the heads of every Liberal Association throughout the country, and a great many of the leading journalists of the kingdom. I have taken pains to ascertain the feeling of the Liberal Party generally, and one and all, without a single exception, assure me that the rank and file of the Party stand at the back of the noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack, and agree entirely with every word on the subject that has fallen from the lips of the Prime Minister. I might, perhaps, be permitted to ask in return, a question of the noble Marquess himself. I would put to him a question which was asked last year by the noble Marquess who then led this House with so much dignity and credit—Can he stand up in this House and say that the Chinese policy was in the best interests of the nation and consistent with the high ideals of British prestige and British statesmanship ?

THE MARQUESS OF LONDONDERRY : The noble Earl has alluded so pointedly to myself that I rise now to reply to his question. I agree entirely with the statement made by Mr. Chamberlain. This labour was necessary to develop the resources of South Africa. Had other labour been forthcoming I should have gladly welcomed it, but no such labour was forthcoming, and I say that it was thoroughly worthy of the British Government, in order to develop the country, to get the best labour possible under the circumstances. I should like to ask how the large body who the noble Earl says regard the conditions of labour in South Africa as slavery reconcile that view with the remarks of the noble Earl the Colonial Secretary who said in your Lordship's House that he deeply regretted the use of the term slavery.

*EARL CARRINGTON : I think my noble friend behind me has answered that question already. I now understand, from the noble Marquess's reply, that he at any rate considers that this Chinese policy, to which we have such great objection, is in the interests of the nation and consistent with the high ideals of British prestige and statesmanship. After all, this is not a question of language ; it is not a question of substance ; it is a question of principle. It is a question of right and wrong, and it seems to me that now we see how it was that the late Government went head over heels into what Lord Lansdowne so felicitously called "the Chamberlain abyss." We see how it was that the magnificent Conservative majority melted like snow before the sun. The late Government utterly failed to grasp the depth, the solidity, and the sincerity of the national feeling on this question.

It seems to be supposed that this agitation was a manufactured article, all froth and fizz and bubble, like some foreign wine, which in a short time became flat and without a vestige of sparkle or life. Well, that is indeed a most grevious mistake. Noble Lords are not particular in the words that they use as regards ourselves. We are called "blubberers" and "sloppy sentimentalists." In almost every speech that is made either in this or the other House or in the country, we are accused of misrepresentation. The term has been several times used that we have "traded on the best instincts of working people." That is what we are accused of. I quite agree that the best instincts of the working people are what we believe in, and it was the best instincts of the working classes which gave us our triumphant majority at the last general election. The instincts of the working classes all over the country told them that this Chinese labour was wrong, and the working classes both at home and in the Colonies called forth the protest of an Empire against a British disgrace and an Imperial wrong

THE EARL OF STRADBROKE: My Lords, it is a remarkable fact that in debating this subject those of your Lordships who have had practical experience in the management of affairs in South Africa speak in one strain, while those who have not had that experience adopt the opposite view. This question, I venture to think, is one of very great importance. It is of importance not merely to the mining interest in South Africa—to the mine-owners and the shareholders—but to the welfare of the Transvaal and the Orange River Colony generally. The welfare of the mines means the welfare of those two provinces. Your Lordships know very well that the farmers in those Colonies have had very hard times to go through. The seasons have been against them, and they have never had an opportunity yet to recover from the great ravages of the rinderpest that swept their flocks and herds in 1896. It is a great relief to them to be free from heavy taxes and all rates, which is their condition now; but, if the mines ceased to be profitable, the great sources of income to those provinces would be dried up. They have now the full advantage of free education, and the whole of the civil administration is paid for by taxes raised from the mines, which is the only direct taxation, I believe, there.

I quite agree, and your Lordships will agree, that it would be preferable, if sufficient black labour were forthcoming, to work the mines by that labour, but I think it has been shown that such is not the case. The Kaffirs do not really care for work in the mines, and I believe they only do so as a last resort. They much prefer work on the land, and so long as they can earn sufficient money to exist in that way they will not be tempted to enter the mines.

It is occasionally alleged that the Chinamen have been induced to go to the Transvaal under a misapprehension. I have in my hand a report from the American Consul-General at Lein-Tsin. It is of course an independent report, and it shows that before the Chinese leave their native shores the most searching questions are put to them. The day before shipment the coolies are taken in lots of tens to the office of the Chinese Protector, and the conditions of the contract into which they are entering is fully explained to them. They are asked—"Do you go of your own free will?" and they are told that if anyone regrets having accepted the engagement and does not wish to go to South Africa he is at perfect liberty then to go home without any punishment being inflicted or his being required to pay any penalty at all. This evidence shows perfectly clearly that all the Chinamen who go to South Africa know exactly the conditions of the contract into which they have entered.

I hope His Majesty's Government will further consider this matter before they decide definitely to put a stop to the importation of Chinese coolies in South Africa. I hope they will take further expert evidence on the matter, and that they will remember that this question is one of the very greatest importance, not merely to the mining interest, but to the interests of the Transvaal and the Orange River Colony as a whole, as on the welfare of the mines depends so greatly the speedy development of those Colonies.

THE DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH: My Lords, the noble Earl the Secretary of State for the Colonies has displayed so much courtesy in replying to the numerous questions which have been presented to him this evening that it is with some hesitation that I put a few more. I will simply ask the noble Earl the Questions standing in my name on the Paper, and perhaps he will reply to them as categorically as possible. I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies if he will grant a return showing (1) the number of Chinese labourers who have in each month since 1st January, 1905, been removed from one mine to another; (2) the number sent back to China; (3) the number who have returned to the Transvaal after repatriation; and (4) the total cost of these movements and upon whom the charge has fallen.

*THE EARL OF ELGIN: My Lords, I can give the noble Duke some of the information for which he asks. With regard to this request for the number of Chinese labourers who have in each month since January 1st, 1905, been removed from one mine to another, I am afraid we have not that information at present, but if the noble Duke would particularly like to have it we will get it from South Africa. With regard to the second and third questions, as to the number sent back to China and the number who have returned to the Transvaal after repatriation, I would refer the noble Duke to a telegram we received from Lord Selborne on January 23rd, which is on page 80 of the last Blue-book, in which he gives that information.

THE DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH: It is not for the year 1905.

*THE EARL OF ELGIN: It is the total number. Do you want them separated?

THE DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH: If the noble Earl has not the information, I will not press for it. I was anxious to know how many were repatriated in 1905.

*THE EARL OF ELGIN: With regard to the fourth Question put to me by the noble Duke, as to the total cost of these movements and upon whom the charge has fallen, the Answer is obvious. The total cost of any movements must have fallen on the importers under their contract, except in cases where coolies may have returned at their own expense. I have no information as to those numbers, but I do not suppose they are of any consequence. If the noble Duke wishes it, I can get that information also.

THE DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH: The noble Earl states that he has no figures of the coolies who have been moved from one mine to another. Under one of the Articles of the Convention it is stipulated that no immigrant should be moved from one mine to another without the approval of his Consul, so that there must be some record.

*THE EARL OF ELGIN: It has not been sent home.

THE DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH: But there must be some record in the Transvaal.

*THE EARL OF ELGIN: I will get the information, if the noble Duke wishes.

LORD COLERIDGE: If the noble Earl grants this Return I hope he will distinguish the movements of Chinese labourers from one mine to another where both mines belong to the same group; for, while a labourer may not be moved from one employer to another, I understand he may be moved from one mine to another mine in the same group and under the same company. The Return without this distinction would be illusory.

PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE.

LORD NEWTON rose to ask the Lord Privy Seal whether in view of the appointment of a Committee upon Parliamentary Procedure in another place, steps will be taken by the Government to secure due consideration for the rights and privileges of this House.

The noble Lord said: My Lords, in returning to this somewhat well-worn topic, which is always associated by my noble friend Lord Rosebery with the advent of spring, I must admit that at first sight there is apparently no connection between a Committee upon Parliamentary Procedure in another place and what goes on here. It is evident, however, that if important changes with regard to the session are effected, and if no changes are made with regard to the method in which Bills are presented to, and considered by, this House, then our interests will materially be affected. Nevertheless, as far as I have been able to notice, our existence appears to have been so far entirely forgotten, which is perhaps not surprising if we reflect that during the last few years the existence of this House has been almost entirely ignored.

This unsatisfactory state of things has frequently been called attention to in this House, and I will not repeat those arguments with which you are by this time so painfully familiar; but I do not think anybody can fail to realize that during recent years we have gradually allowed ourselves to be elbowed out of legislative work, and we really seem to be approaching a position which an unfriendly critic might describe as a sort of compromise between a high-class debating society and a registry office. As far as loquacity is concerned, there is absolutely no check upon us at all, except such as is imposed by modesty. We discuss all manner of things very frequently, and even this afternoon we have touched upon an immense variety of topics, more so than would have been expected from a casual study of the Notice Paper.

We occasionally go through the form of passing Bills, but after they have passed through all their stages in your Lordships' House they disappear and are swallowed up in the vortex in another place. In spite of this frruitless labour, I observe that the noble and learned Earl Lord Halsbury has already introduced and taken the Second Reading of two important Bills which are presumably before long to appear in another place, and I observed with interest that the noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack recognised in one of those Bills an old acquaintance with which he had frequently come in contact before, but which, for some unfortunate reason which he did not specify, had failed to find a place on the Statute-book. The measure which I allude to is the Bill relating to the prevention of corruption. As I say, there is practically no limit on our loquacity for the greater part of the year, but when our real functions begin and we have to consider Bills which are sent up to us from another place, when you might imagine that the functions of a revising Chamber would come into full play, we are practically told that the time for talking has come to an end and the registering period has arrived. We are practically obliged at the close of the session to confine ourselves to what I term purely registry work; and the climax was reached, I think, last session, when on the occasion of the introduction of the Aliens Bill time was so limited that the representative of His Majesty's Government was actually afraid to move his own Amendments. This is a state of things which has often been protested against, not only by unofficial persons like myself, but by the most rev. Primate, and more especially by noble Lords who are now sitting on the Front Governmental Bench. But, in spite of all this somewhat profitless though indignant talk, very little has been achieved, and I can only point to two tangible actions on our part. We have during recent years passed two Resolutions. One of them was due to myself and had regard to the alteration of the time and the session, an alteration which I am glad to think there seems to be some hope of carrying out; and the other Resolution to which I desire to call your attention was one passed unanimously by this House as late as April of last year.

This was an extremely bold, if not aggressive, Resolution, what I might almost term a sort of blood and thunder Resolution, asserting that we would refuse to consider Bills unless we had time to do so. But what happened? The usual thing happened; and my noble and learned friend Lord James of Hereford, after we had disposed of the Aliens Bill under the ignominious conditions I have just mentioned, made a pathetic and indignant speech in which he pointed out that no less than sixteen Government Bills had been passed through this House, had gone down to another place, and had there been lost sight of, including several measures introduced by the Lord Chancellor himself. I remember that Lord James was specially scandalised by the fact that the ex-Prime Minister, when perpetrating his annual "massacre of the innocents," paid no attention whatever to, and never even mentioned, those luckless measures. The protest of Lord James of Hereford was echoed by other peers, and I believe that Lord Spencer—whom we all regret to see no longer in his place—remarked that he was as jealous of the dignity and importance of this House as noble Lords opposite. What he wanted to preserve was that this should not be merely a House for recording the proposals of the Government, but a real House of revision; and he declared that we were in great jeopardy of losing our powers of revision. As far as my personal opinion is concerned, I should be inclined to assert that that power of revision had already been lost, and we may possibly never recover it.

This dignified protest had barely ceased last session when the Unemployed Workmen Bill made its appearance. It was introduced, rushed through its various stages, and, if I am not mistaken, in two more days or less the House was up. Everybody agrees that this is a thoroughly unsatisfactory state of things, but it may not unfairly be retorted upon us that we have ourselves to blame to some extent. If, instead of indulging in the luxury of these blood and thunder resolutions, which I an sorry to say we have run away from, we had every now and then thrown out a Bill or two our position at the present moment would be somewhat more satisfactory.

On the occasion of the first debate this session, upon the Address, the noble Marquess who leads the Opposition pointed out that we were at the present moment confronted with a very exceptional state of things. He pointed out that the Unionist Party was represented by an exiguous minority in another place and that in this House there was a large majority; and, more especially in view of the protests which had frequently been made by noble Lords opposite, it was clearly desirable that this House should be consulted in good time as to any important measures which may be contemplated. He asked for an assurance on this point which he did not obtain.

I suppose it would be hoping too much to anticipate that this assurance will be obtained by me. I am afraid we must recognise with sorrow that, so far as one can judge, the majority of the Members in another place are not animated with any particular sympathy for this assembly. It is possible, although it would be much to be regretted, that points of difference may arise between the two Houses. I need not say that personally I hope that these points of difference will not arise, but, if they do, it does seem to me most desirable that neither House should be entitled to complain of want of consideration on the part of the other; and for this reason, if for no other, I would venture to appeal to noble Lords opposite, now that they are in office, to act up to those professions which we have so often heard from them, and have regard to the honour and dignity of this House.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Lord TWEEDMOUTH), who replied in the absence of the Marquess of Ripon, said: My Lords, I can re-echo what fell from my noble friend Earl Spencer last year, and can assure the House that we on this side are in no sense less anxious than noble Lords opposite to maintain the dignity and to secure the privileges of the House. I am rather glad to think that my noble friend Lord Newton is afraid that the House will continue to be a mere House of registry. My own idea is that the principal reason why the House has been a House of registry during the greater part of the last twenty years is that for seventeen of those twenty years the great majority of this House have been in sympathy with the great majority of the other House and have, therefore, been only too glad to pass the measures that have come up from the other House. I have a recollection of 1894, when, I think, the House ceased to be a House of registry, and became a House of a very different character.

I do not think the appointment of a Committee upon Parliamentary procedure in another place is an occasion to discuss the business of your Lordships' House. It would be better, surely, in order to show our respect for the other House, to allow the other House to have its Committee and decide upon its procedure and then, if we found that our privileges were in any way infringed, to consider in what way we could approach the other House, and come to an agreement that our privileges should be properly maintained. I venture to think it is altogether previous to raise this question now; and, therefore, I can only say, on behalf of the Government, that should there be any danger, or should it be considered that there is any danger, to the privileges of this House, we shall be only too glad to consult with noble Lords opposite with a view to securing a proper arrangement for the benefit of this House.

*THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE: My Lords, I take it that so far as the substance of my noble friend's Motion is concerned there will be a general concurrence on both sides of the House that it is desirable that some steps should be taken to put an end to a state of things which we have all so frequently deplored.

I venture to say in reference to the form of his notice that no Committee of the other House would be in a position to deal with the rights and privileges of this House. My noble friend's action is certainly opportune. Last year, your Lordships will recollect, we were all of one mind, but we all felt that no permanent and effectual improvement in the existing state of things could be looked for except with the co-operation of the other House of Parliament, whom we may regard as the predominant partner in such matters. After the discussion which then took place, I made inquiries from the Prime Minister as to the possibility of inducing the predominant partner to interest himself in the matter, but the result of my investigations was, I am sorry to say, not of a re-assuring character.

But, at the present moment, the position is changed. The predominant partner has interested himself of his own accord in the question of Parliamentary procedure. If, however, the Parliamentary machine is really to be put into good working order, that cannot be done except by some measure of co-operation between both Houses. Such co-operation may not be possible at this moment. I assume, however, from what the noble Lord opposite has said, that the matter is being considered, and that His Majesty's Government prefer a dilatory policy to one of prompter action. But it does occur to one, as a conceivable solution of the difficulty, that the question might be dealt with by a joint Committee of the two Houses, or, again, that any Committee appointed by one House should make it its business to inform itself as to the condition of things which prevails in the other, and as to the feeling of your Lordships upon the subject. We have the assurance of the noble Lord opposite that the matter will not be lost sight of; and I earnestly trust that he and his friends will be more successful than we were in bringing about a lasting improvement in the conditions under which our business is transacted.

House adjourned at twenty minutes before Seven o'clock, till To-morrow, half-past Ten o'clock.

The Marquess of Lansdowne.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Monday, 5th March, 1906.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

One other Member took and subscribed the Oath.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS (STANDING ORDER 62 COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bills, referred on the First Reading thereof, Standing Order No. 62 has been complied with, viz.:—Ascot District Gas (Electric Lighting) Bill; Brixham Gas (Electric Lighting) Bill; Cheltenham Gas Bill; London and South Western Railway Bill; Rochester, Chatham, and Strood Gas Bill.

Ordered, That the Bills be read a second time.

PROVISIONAL ORDER BILLS (STANDING ORDERS APPLICABLE THERETO COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That in the case of the following Bill, referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders which are applicable thereto have been complied with, viz.:—Metropolitan Police Provisional Order Bill.

Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time To-morrow.

Cardiff Gas Bill. Read a second time, and committed.

Derby Gas Bill. Read a second time, and committed.

Dowlais Gas Bill; Epsom and Ewell Gas Bill; Great Eastern Railway Bill, Read a second time, and committed.

London and India Docks and Millwall Dock Companies Bill. Read a second time, and committed.

Merthyr Tydfil Gas Bill. Read a second time, and committed.

Millwall Dock Bill. Read a second time, and committed.

Peterborough Gas Bill; St. John's (Westminster) Improvement Bill; South Metropolitan Gas Bill; South Suburban Gas Bill. Read a second time, and committed.

Southampton Gas Bill; Sutton, Southcoates, and Drypool Gas Bill; Tottenham and Edmonton Gas Bill. Read a second time, and committed.

Watford Gas Bill. Read a second time, and committed.

Bristol Corporation Bill (by Order). Read a second time, and committed.

St. Pancras Electricity Bill (by Order). Read a second time, and committed.

PETITIONS.

ELEMENTARY EDUCATION (RELIGIOUS TEACHING IN CHURCH OF ENGLAND SCHOOLS).

Petition from Burythorpe, against alteration of law; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

PRISONS (SCOTLAND).

Paper [Presented 2nd March] to be printed. [No. 74.]

ARMY ESTIMATES, 1906-7.

Copy presented, of Army Estimates of Effective and Non-Effective Services for the year ending 31st March, 1907 [by Command]; Referred to the Committee of Supply, and to be printed. [No. 73.]

ARMY (ORDNANCE FACTORIES ESTIMATES, 1906-7).

Estimate presented, of the sum required for the year ending 31st March, 1907, to defray the Expense of the Ordnance Factories [by Command]; Referred to the Committee of Supply, and to be printed. [No. 75.]

ARMY (MEMORANDUM ON ESTIMATES).

Copy presented, of Memorandum of the Secretary of State relating to the Army Estimates of 1906-7 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

NAVAL WORKS.

Copy presented, of Memorandum showing Progress and Expenditure, &c., on Items included in the Naval Works Act [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

IRISH LAND COMMISSION (PROCEEDINGS).

Copy presented, of Return of Proceedings during the month of January, 1906 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

ECCLESIASTICAL COMMISSION.

Copy presented, of Fifty-eighth Report from the Ecclesiastical Commissioners for England, with an Appendix [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

CHURCH ESTATES COMMISSION.

Copy presented, of Fifty-fifth Report from the Church Estates Commissioners for the year preceding 1st March, 1906 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN.

Copy presented, of Annual Statistical Report by the University Court of the University of Aberdeen for 1904-5 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 76.]

UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN.

Copy presented, of Abstract of Accounts of the University of Aberdeen for the year ending 15th September, 1905 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 77.]

RUSSIA (NEW CUSTOMS TARIFF) (INTERIM STATEMENT).

Copy presented, of Translation of the New Customs Tariff of Russia as modified by Commercial Treaties with Germany and France [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).

Copy presented, of Diplomatic and Consular Report, Annual Series, No. 3532 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

PAPERS LAID UPON THE TABLE BY THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE.

1. Public Records (Northern Circuit), Copy of Schedule containing a List and

Particulars of Classes of Documents existing or accruing in the Office of the Clerk of Assize of the Northern Circuit which are not considered of sufficient public value to justify their preservation in the Public Record Office [by Act].

2. Public Records (Board of Agriculture and Fisheries), Copy of Schedule containing a List and Particulars of Classes of Documents existing or accruing in the Office of the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries (Ordnance Survey Department) which are not considered of sufficient public value to justify their preservation in the Public Record Office [by Act].

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Accounts of the Post Office Savings Bank.

DR. MACNAMARA (Camberwell, N.): To ask the Postmaster-General what, on the 31st December, 1905, was the total amount due to depositors in the Post Office Savings Bank; what amount of consols was sold during the year 1905, and at what average price; what was the amount of Consuls held on account of the Post Office Savings Bank on the 31st December, 1905, and what is the average price per cent. at which the stock was purchased; whether it is his intention to resume preparation and publication of a balance sheet of the Post Office Savings Bank, after repealing, if that be necessary, Section 9 (2) of the Savings Bank Act, 1904; what is the deficiency, if any, in the income account for the year ended 31st December, 1905; and what was the total amount withdrawn during the year under the new regulation permitting the withdrawal, without notice, of sums not exceeding £1.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) The total amount due to depositors in the Post Office Savings Bank on the 31st December, 1905, is estimated to have been £152,113,000. The exact figures cannot yet be given. The amount of consols sold from the Post Office Savings Bank fund during the year 1905 was £1,445,525, the average price being £89 13s. 7d. per cent. The amount of consols held on account of the fund on the 31st December, 1905, was £60,715,140 the cost price on balance of the stock averaging £102 16s. 5d. per cent. It will, of course, be understood that these consols were bought for the most part in years when the stock bore a higher rate of interest and stood at a higher price. The preparation and publication of the balance sheet, containing a valuation of the securities held on hehalf of the Post Office Savings Bank, was discontinued in accordance with the recommendations of the Select Committee of 1902, who considered such a return to be misleading, and I am not aware of any sufficient reason for reversing that decision. The deficiency in the Income Account of the Savings Bank for the year ended 31st December, 1905, is estimated at £92,032. The system of withdrawals "on demand" only came into force on the 3rd July, 1905. The total amount withdrawn under this system between that date and the end of the year was £1,270,163, and it has been found to be a great convenience to the small depositors.

Scope of Post Office Savings Bank Inquiry.

MR. HUGH BARRIE (Londonderry, N.): To ask the Postmaster-General if, in the inquiry he has promised *re* wages and conditions of work of Post Office employees, he will include the Savings Bank, Money Order, and Telephone Departments.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) Certain classes of employees in these Departments are included in the reference, but not the supervising or clerical lasses.

Curriculum of Osborne and Dartmouth Naval Cadets.

MR. BELLAIRS (Lynn Regis): To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether he can give the number of hours per week devoted to seamanship, navigation, practical engineering, mathematics, physics and chemistry, history, geography, French and Bible study of the naval cadets at Osborne and Dartmouth; whether the Bible study takes place on Sundays; whether he has received any official report as to the adequacy of the time allotted to seamanship; and whether the Admiralty propose to test the elementary knowledge of those boys entered without any competition by an examination with boys of the same age at Dartmouth who were entered under the old system of limited competition.

(*Answered by Mr. Edmund Robertson.*) The hours per week devoted to formal teaching and study in the subjects enumerated in the Question are as follows :—

	Osborne.	Dartmouth.
Seamanship (instruction with models, etc.)	1½	1½
Seamanship (practical instruction, boat sailing, etc.)	No time limit	
Navigation	—	4
Practical engineering	11¼	9½
Mathematics	7½	6
Physics and chemistry (science) (one ¾-hour period on alternate weeks	4½	7
History	3	3
Geography	2¼	—
English (one ¾-hour period on alternate weeks)	3	2½
French	5¼	6†
Bible study :— Including 1 hour on Sunday at Osborne Including ¾ hour on Sunday at Dartmouth	1¾	1¾

The lessons last three-quarters of an hour at Osborne and one hour at Dartmouth. The Bible study or religious instruction takes place on a week-day as well as on Sunday, each cadet having one period on a week-day as well as one on Sunday. The time allotted to seamanship instruction (school and practical work) has been fixed in conference with the officers responsible for the instruction. In addition to the above, however, a considerable amount of time is devoted to gaining practical experience in managing boats under sails, oars, and steam, and to work at sea in the cruisers. The subject of seamanship is one to which the Admiralty attach great importance, and the allowance of time in the curriculum has been fixed with due regard to the age of the boys, and the period during which they will be in the training colleges, and to the fact that the course in the colleges is to be followed by six months' training in cruisers as well as three years' subsequent service as midshipmen. The course of study and instruction of the cadets entered at Dartmouth under the old system, differs materially from that laid down for the cadets transferred from Osborne, and any examination of the kind indicated, could only apply in a few subjects, and would therefore be of little or no value for the purpose of comparison. Any comparison that has been made by officers and masters, who have under observation the cadets entered under both systems, although interesting, does not lead to results which in any way affect the principles on which the new system of training has been established.

Transfer of Coolies under the British Guiana Ordinance.

CAPTAIN BALFOUR (Middlesex, Hornsey): To ask the Under Secretary for the Colonies if under Sections 181 and 182 of the British Guiana Ordinance of 1891, indentured immigrants working on a plantation are transferred with the sale or lease of the plantation to the service of the purchaser or new lessor, without being consenting parties to such transfer; and, if so, whether any alteration of such provisions is contemplated by the Government.

(*Answered by Mr. Churchill.*) Section 181 of the British Guiana Ordinance provides that every lessee whose lease expires is entitled to have the indentures of any immigrants on the plantation transferred for the unexpired remainder of their term of service, to any employer approved by the Immigration Agent General, the lessor of the estate having the first option. Section 182 provides that where a plantation is sold or leased, or passes by devise or inheritance, any indentured immigrant on it shall render the same service to the purchaser or lessee as to his former employer. It must be noted that the immigrant enters into an agreement to emigrate with an officer representing the Colonial Government and not with any individual employer, and the Government is responsible for his well-being. The Government provides by Ordinance that he shall not, during the period of his indenture, suffer by unemployment due to any changes affecting the owership of plantations. The particular person who owns the plantation is unknown to the immigrant till he arrives in the Colony, but he relies on the Government for the due observance of the terms offered to him. Under the Ordinance the governor has very wide powers of determining the indentures of any immigrant if, in his opinion, the management of any estate is unsatisfactory. It should be added that under this system of colonisation, through the operation of a labour contract, more than 50 per cent, of the Indian immigrants become permanent settlers. No substantial amendment of the Ordinance seems to be required by any facts at present within the knowledge of the Secretary of State.

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†Or, when German is taken, 3½ hours French and 2½ hours German.

Rules under Trade Marks Act—Conference of Commercial Bodies.

Sir SAMUEL SCOTT (Marylebone, W.) To ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he has summoned a conference of commercial bodies to consider the proposed rules under the new Trade Marks Act; and, if so, whether he has invited the Association of Trade Protection Societies to that conference.

(*Answered by Lloyd-George*). Yes, Sir; a conference has been summoned and an invitation sent to the association referred to.

Irish Industrial School Debts.

Mr. SLOAN (Belfast S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he can say what is the present debt against the industrial schools in Ireland, the amount paid as interest per annum, and to whom payable.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) I presume the hon. Member refers to loans to industrial schools made under the provisions of The Industrial Schools (Ireland) Act, 1885. The amount of the loans at present outstanding is £17,956. The amount of interest paid in 1905 was £651 13s. 1d. The payments are made to the Board of Works.

Erection of Labourer's Cottage on Mear's Holding at Castlerea.

Mr. SLOAN: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the fact that at a recent meeting of the Castlerea Poor Law Board it was decided to erect a labourer's cottage on the six-acre holding of a farmer called Mears; and whether, seeing there are ranches containing several hundreds of acres in the vicinity, what steps, if any, will he take in the matter.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The taking of a site for a labourer's cottage on this holding was authorised by Provisional Order so far back as the 1st August, 1903, the then owner and occupier having agreed to give the site. Subsequently, when the estate of which the holding is part was being sold to the tenants, Mrs. Mears became purchaser of the holding. In the opinion of the Local Government Board it is scarcely probable that Mrs. Mears was not made aware that the district council had been previously authorised to acquire the site; but, in any event, the rights of the district council to take the site cannot now be questioned.

Teaching of Latin and French in Irish Schools.

Mr. SLOAN: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether, in view of the fact that the teaching of the Irish language is being provided for by the Commissioners of Education, he will also consider the advisability of restoring Latin and French as extra subjects.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) Latin and French can hardly be considered to be within the scope of Irish primary education. When extra fees in these subjects were given comparatively few schools took advantage of the privilege.

Alleged Intimidation at Ecclesville.

Mr. LONSDALE (Armagh, Mid.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that on the 16th February, at an auction of grass on lands upon the Ecclesville estate, close to the town of Fintona, county Tyrone, a district councillor named Culgin and the former tenant named Mullins, who was evicted from the holding, interfered in a manner calculated to intimidate intending purchasers; and that, upon the local postmaster being declared the purchaser of one lot, Mr. Culgin publicly declared that he, being a public servant, had no right to be a land grabber; and what steps the Government intend to take to prevent such proceedings.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) I am informed that the police were not present on the occasion referred to, but that the landlord's agent made a statement to them to the effect mentioned in the Question. It was open to the agent to take such proceedings as he might have been advised. The police have instructions to preserve order and report offences, but they cannot be expected to attend every auction; and in this case only five persons seem to have been present.

Alleged Intimidation at Coolgreaney, County Wicklow.

MR. LONSDALE: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that John Johnston and Richard Cochrane, who have recently purchased farms on the Coolgreaney estate, county Wicklow, from which the former tenants were evicted, have received notices threatening them with death if they do not clear out within a month; whether in both cases farms have been provided for the evicted tenants elsewhere; and what steps the police are taking to protect these men.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) I am informed by the police authorities that John Johnston and Richard Corcoran, who have purchased their holdings on the Coolgreaney estate, county Wexford, received threatening letters on the 17th February. It is a fact that the persons who were evicted from the holdings in question are in occupation of farms elsewhere; but I think it right to add that I am informed by the police that these men are well-disposed, in comfortable circumstances, and are not suspected of complicity in sending the letters. Messrs. Johnston and Corcoran have been in possession of the holdings referred to for more than sixteen years, and have not been interfered with till now. They are receiving protection by police patrols.

Recruiting in Ireland—Seditious Placards.

MR. LONSDALE: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the opinion of Chief Baron Palles at the Leinster Winter Assizes on 1st December, that to endeavour to dissuade Irishmen from joining the Army, Navy, or Police for the alleged reason that England is the arch enemy of Ireland is seditious; whether he is aware that numerous placards of this character have been circulated in Ireland during the last six months; and what is the nature of the instructions upon which the police are now acting in this matter.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) I have seen a report of the Lord Chief Baron's address to the grand jury, in which he stated the law in the terms set forth in the Question. I am informed by the police authorities that many leaflets of the character mentioned have been distributed within the past six months, but that recently the dissemination of such matter has become comparatively rare. The police have instructions to seize printed matter of a seditious nature, and to report such evidence as may be available regarding persons distributing the same.

Destruction of Posters at Dungannon by Police.

MR. LONSDALE: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether any Report was called for from the constabulary at Carrickmore as to their reasons for destroying placards relating to a lecture at the Dungannon Club; what was the nature of the contents of the posters in question; and whether any official communication was sent to the Carrickmore Constabulary expressing approval or disapproval of their action in this case.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) It would be entirely contrary to usage, and not in the interests of the public service, to state what official communications, if any, pass between the Inspector-General and the members of his force. The poster in question was in the following terms: "Dungannon Club, Carrickmore. A lecture on the carrying out of the Sinn Fein Policy will be given by Padraic MacArtain on January 6th, at 12.30. The Orange and Green will carry the day."

Irish Education—Payment of Capitation Grant.

MR. GINNELL (Westmeath, N.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he is aware that the annual capitation grant, which forms part of the remuneration of national teachers, due in respect of one year is not paid until the April of the following year, and that this delay in payment is an inconvenience to the teachers; and, seeing that this delay is avoidable, will he take steps to have payment made at the earliest possible date.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The residue of the school grant under the Irish Education Act of 1892 for each calendar year is paid as a capitation grant early in April of the following year. It was found necessary to adopt this course in 1900–1, when the new system of consolidated salaries came into force, and the same course has since been followed. An arrangement, however, has now been made, with the approval of the Treasury, by which about a third of the residual grant in question for the past year will be paid during the current financial year, that is to say, during the present month. I am unable, at present, to make any statement as to the possibility of expediting these payments in future years, but the importance of the Question will not be lost sight of.

Rents on W.L. Marshall's Estate, Callinaferry, County Kerry.

MR. THOMAS O'DONNELL (Kerry, W.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Estates Commissioners have received from the tenants on the estate of W. L. Marshall, Callinaferry, county Kerry, a document stating that they were unable to pay the prices they had agreed on for the purchase of their holdings; whether, at the signing of the agreements, the agent refused to allow the tenants to submit them to their solicitor; whether writs were served, since the signing of the agreements, on some of the tenants for old rents and arrears; whither non-judicial tenants were got to sign agreements making them judicial tenants at the time of the sale, and without any reduction in rent; and whether a thorough investigation will be made before any money is advanced for the purchase of this estate.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) An originating request in respect of the sale of this estate has been lodged with the Commissioners. The estate has not yet been inspected. The Estates Commissioners have no information as to what took place between the landlord and the tenants upon or subsequent to the signing of the agreements for purchase. On the 8th November last the Commissioners received a letter on behalf of the tenants, stating that they repudiated the agreements already signed by them. The matter will be fully and carefully considered by the Commissioners when the estate is being dealt with by them.

Purchases of Land—Kerry Congested Districts.

MR. THOMAS O'DONNELL: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland how much land in congested Kerry has been bought under the Act of 1903 by the Congested Districts Board, giving the average price paid for first-term, second-term, and non-judicial rents.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The Congested Districts Board have purchased 38,335 acres of land in the scheduled congested districts of county Kerry, and have paid an average price of nineteen years purchase of first-term rents; twenty-three and three-quarter years purchase of second-term rents; and fifteen and three-fifth years purchase of non-judicial rents.

Purchase of the Rae Estate, Keel, County Kerry.

MR. THOMAS O'DONNELL: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Congested Districts Board are willing to buy the Rae estate, Keel, county Kerry, and, if so, what is the cause of the delay; whether he is aware that the agent, Mr. Huggard, has stated that he will never allow the estate to be purchased by the Board; and whether any steps will be taken to give the Congested Districts Board compulsory powers to deal with the urgent needs of congested districts, especially where landlords and agents adopt an irreconcilable attitude.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The Congested Districts Board made an offer for the purchase of this estate in November, 1904, but their offer was declined by the owners. The Board have no knowledge of the statement attributed to Mr. Huggard. I am not at present prepared to make any statement on the subject of compulsory purchase.

Proceeds of Sale of Irish Estates to London Companies—Report of Committee.

MR. O'DOHERTY (Donegal, N.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will take into consideration the Report of the Select Committees appointed in 1890 and 1891 to inquire into the disposition of the proceeds of sale of the Irish estates of the London companies, with a view to seeing whether legislative effect could now be given to their recommendations; and whether he can state what is the total amount which those companies received under the Land Purchase Acts, and what is the annual sum which they now expend on educational or charitable purposes in Ireland.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The conclusions reached by the Select Committee referred to in the Question do not seem to be in accord with the judgments delivered by the Master of the Rolls in Ireland and subsequently by the Court of Appeal there in 1898, and I could not say, without much consideration of the full effect of those decisions, whether legislative measures could be introduced, with a prospect of success, to give effect to the recommendations of the Committee. The total amounts advanced to the different companies, under the Land Purchase Acts prior to the Act of 1903, was £927,009. In addition, proceedings are pending before the Estates Commissioners in respect of the sales, under the Act of 1903, of the Mercers Company's estate, involving a purchase money of £191,709, and the Irish Society's est te, the purchase money of which amounts to £88,918. I have no means of ascertaining the annual sum which the companies expend on educational or charitable purposes in Ireland, but am told that it is no longer a large one.

Purchase of the Estates of the Irish Society.

MR. O'DOHERTY: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether applications have been made, under the Land Purchase Acts, for loans for the purchase of part of the estate of the Irish Society; what is the amount applied for, and what stage the proceedings have reached; whether it will be part of the duty of the Estates Commissioners, or of any other public authority, to inquire whether any and what trusts attach to the proceeds of sale; and whether he will inquire as to the possibility of having the purchase money regulated by a charitable scheme, which will secure the economical administration and impartial distribution of these and other funds of the Irish Society.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) An originating application for the sale of lands in the county of Londonderry was lodged by the Irish Society on May 25th, 1905. Advances have been sanctioned in this case, amounting to £88,688, and cash to the amount of £230 has been lodged, making the total purchase money £88,918, and it is expected that the advances in this case will shortly be made. I am advised that it is not part of the duty of the Commissioners to inquire whether any and what trusts attach to the proceeds of the sale, though it might become the duty of the Attorney-General to intervene and take action should the society appear to be failing to carry out such trusts as attach to those proceeds. I am not, however, aware of any reason for apprehending that the trusts on which the estates, or other proceeds, have been judicially declared to be held, are not being, or will not be, faithfully observed. The suggestion made in the last paragraph will not escape my attention, but I cannot estimate the possibilities of giving effect to it.

Intimidation of Jurors at Galway.

MR. T. L. CORBETT (Down, N.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that, since the conviction of thirty-six persons for various agrarian offences at the last Galway Summer Assizes, the special jurors who tried these men have been subjected to intimidation; and that the residence of Mr. O. McDermott Lynch, who was a special juror at the late assizes, has been attacked by armed men, who fired about a dozen shots through the doors and windows; and will he say what steps were taken to trace these men and to protect special jurors in the discharge of their duty.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) I am informed that it is not the case that the jurors who tried the thirty-six persons mentioned have been subjected to any direct intimidation. On the night of September 7th last, some months before I came into office, three shots were fired into the house of Mr. Lynch, who was a special juror at the assizes, but the police, who closely investigated the matter, do not believe that his being a juror was the cause of the firing. The police used every effort to trace the offenders, but without success. I am not aware that any special steps for the protection of jurors have become necessary.

Local Councillors and Salaried Appointments.

MR. J. P. FARRELL (Longford, N.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the Local Government Orders in Council (New Accounts Order), amongst other things, enact that members of a council must be twelve months resigned before being eligible as candidates for salaried positions on these councils, and also that a hard labour sentence of imprisonment will be a bar to such persons ever seeking positions under the local boards; and whether, as hard labour was frequently given to public representatives in Ireland under the Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act, 1887, this provision will be annulled.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The Order referred to is the Public Bodies Order, which prohibits the appointment as poor rate collectors of persons who, within the previous twelve months, were members of certain public bodies, or who, within the preceding five years, were imprisoned with hard labour. In the latter case the Order gives power to the Local Government Board to assent to departures from the rule. It is not intended to modify the provisions in question.

Reinstatement of Evicted Tenants—Case of John Quinn at Lavagh.

MR. O'DOWD (Sligo, S.) To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that John Quinn, an evicted tenant of the estate of Sir Joselyn Gore Booth, situate at Lavagh, near Tubbercurry, county Sligo, has left the question of his reinstatement for settlement to the Estates Commissioners, and that the landlord, the evicted tenant, and the present occupier, Edward Layng, have all signed witnessed agreements, by which they bind themselves to abide by any decision arrived at by the Estates Commissioners; and whether, seeing that these agreements were lodged with the Estates Commissioners over twelve months ago, steps will now be taken with the view of having this evicted tenant restored to his holding.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The Estates Commissioners have inquired into the case of the evicted tenant, John Quinn, whose holding is at present occupied by Edward Laying, and have informed the owner's solicitors of the advance which they are prepared to make to Quinn for the purchase of the holding if he is restored to it, and of the assistance they are prepared to give towards the settlement of the matter, but they have not yet been informed whether the parties have agreed to accept these terms.

Rate of Interest on Loans Raised for Erection of Labourers' Cottages.

MR. SHEEHAN (Cork Co., Mid.) To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if he will state the rates of interest at present chargeable under Treasury Minute for loans granted for the purpose of the erection of labourers' cottages in Ireland at periods of repayment not exceeding thirty years, forty years, and fifty years respectively.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The rates laid down by the Treasury Minute are as follow:—For periods of repayment not exceeding thirty years, 3¾ per cent.; not exceeding forty years, 4 per cent.; and not exceeding fifty years, 4¼ per cent.

Defalcations of the Registrar to the Recorder of Cork.

Mr. WILLIAM ABRAHAM (Cork, Co. N.E.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the circumstances which have arisen in Cork in consequence of the defalcations of the Registrar to the Recorder of Cork, Mr. Tristram Curry, who fled the country in December last after appropriating to his own use a sum of about £3,000, which had been paid into His Majesty's Court in Equity proceedings by suitors and others; if the Treasury intends to replace at once the money stolen by this official of the Court; and what steps have been or are being taken to bring him to justice.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) I beg to refer to the Answer which my right hon. and learned friend has now given to the similar Question of the hon. Member for Cork.†

Congested Districts Board and Occupation of Farms at Cragg and Ardcrone.

Mr. MURPHY (Kerry, E.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether, having regard to the representations of all the local public bodies in connection with the occupation of the farms at Cragg and Ardcrone, county Kerry, by the Congested Districts Board, he can induce the Board to consider a satisfactory settlement of the claims of the former tenants; and if he can state what use has been made by the Board of these farms during the two years they have been in possession of them.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The farms in question were occupied by tenant purchasers under the Land Purchase Acts who, upwards of twelve years ago, lost their interests through default in the payment of their annuities. In 1903 the Congested Districts Board acquired the tenant purchasers' interests in the farms for £300, and they have since redeemed the Land Commission annuity by a payment of £2,793. The Board purchased the farms for migration purposes, but have so far been obliged to use them for grazing. The Board would regard it as entirely against public policy to reinstate defaulting annuitants under the Land Purchase Acts. They have often stated that this must be their policy, and they do not intend to depart from it.

Incendiarism at Moorpark, near Athenry.

Mr. CHARLES CRAIG (Antrim, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he is aware that the house of John Harte, of Moorpark, near Athenry, was fired into on 21st December last; and will he say if the police captured the persons implicated, and what was the motive for the crime.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The fact is as stated. The police have made every effort to discover the offender, but so far without success. It is difficult to assign motives where perpetrators are unknown, and I must decline to express any opinion upon that point.

Boycotting of Martin Fahey at Bullaun County Galway.

Mr. CHARLES CRAIG: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he is aware that a notice warning the people of the district to shun Martin Fahey for the future, stating that the next notice they would receive if they disregarded this ultimatum would be powder and ball, was posted on a wall at Bullaun, county Galway, on 14th January last; and whether the police have obtained any information as to the origin of the notice or as to the motive which prompted its publication.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The fact is correctly stated in the Question. The police have not succeeded in tracing the person who put up the notice; nor can I say what was his motive.

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† See Col. 99.

Purchase of the Warburton Garryhinch Estate.

MR. DELANY (Queen's County, Ossory): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can say upon what date the Warburton Garryhinch Estate, Queen's County, was placed in the Land Judge's Court; and whether he can say, as the tenants are anxious to avail themselves of the provisions of The Land Purchase Act, 1903, what course they should adopt under the present circumstances.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The petition for sale in the case of this estate was presented to the Land Judge in 1885. The order made by the judge was for the sale of the life interest only of the owner. In such case it is, I am informed, impossible to convey the fee simple to purchasing tenants.

Reinstatement of Evicted Tenants—Application of James Behan.

MR. DELANY: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether a request for reinstatement has been received by the Estates Commissioners from James Behan, 1, Canal View, Dolphin's Barn, Dublin, who claims a farm situated at Ballybrittas, Queen's County, on the estate of Mrs. Cornelia Adair, from which he was evicted in 1898; and whether he can say if the estate in question is before the Commissioners for sale; and, if so, what steps have been taken for the reinstatement of James Behan.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The Answer to the first two inquiries is in the affirmative. Behan's application will be considered by the Estates Commissioners when they are dealing with the estate.

Staff Changes in the Veterinary Department of the Irish Board of Agriculture.

MR. DELANY: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether considerable staff changes are contemplated in the veterinary branch of the Agricultural Department, with a view to introducing a number of fresh officials at an early date; and, if so, whether, seeing that allegations have been made in Parliament and by the local public bodies in Ireland respecting the methods of promotion practised in this branch, he will postpone the contemplated changes till Parliament is informed of the result of the promised inquiry into the working of the Department.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The clerical staff of the veterinary branch of the Department is, with the sanction of the Treasury, being increased by one abstractor transferred from another branch, three new abstractors, and one boy clerk. This increase in the staff is immediately necessary to enable the branch to cope with its existing work.

Effect of Chinese Labour on the Revenues of the Transvaal.

MR. MACKARNESS (Berkshire, Newbury): To ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether, in view of Lord Selborne's statements contained in Blue-book Cd. 2819, that the withdrawal of Chinese labour would cause unfavourable results to the financial and commercial interests of the Transvaal, he can say to what extent, during the year, after the advent of the Chinese labourers, there was an increase or a decrease in the total revenue of the Colony as compared with the two years preceding their advent.

(*Answered by Mr. Churchill.*) The Chinese labourers began to arrive in June, 1904. The Transvaal revenue for the year 30th June, 1904, to 30th June, 1905, was £4,405,438. For the two previous years it was £4,683,205 for 1902–3, and £4,423,211 for 1903–4.

Chinese Labourers and Access to Local Courts of Justice.

MR. MACKARNESS: To ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether his attention has been called to the 9th Article of the Convention of the 13th May, 1904, between the United Kingdom and China, which stipulates that, in every British Colony to which indentured Chinese emigrants proceed, an officer shall be appointed to ensure that the emigrant shall have free access to the courts of justice to obtain the redress for injuries which is secured to all persons, irrespective of race, by the local law; whether this stipulation was ignored by the Transvaal Labour Importation Amendment Ordinance, 1905, which shut out the Chinese from the resident magistrates' courts of the Colony; and whether, in amending the Ordinance, the Government will ensure that the Chinese shall have access to these courts, as contemplated by the Treaty.

(*Answered by Mr. Churchill.*) The jurisdiction conferred by the Ordinance of 1905 on the superintendent and inspectors of foreign labour applies only to offences committed by a labourer, *i.e.*, a coolie labourer, and the coolie is in no sense shut out from the courts in regard to redress for injuries. Even in the case of an offence committed by one coolie labourer against another, the Secretary of State is advised that there is nothing to prevent the aggrieved person seeking redress in the ordinary courts of the Colony in accordance with the stipulation in the 9th Article of the Convention.

Estate of Private James M'Gowan.

MR. J. P. FARRELL: To ask the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies whether his attention has been called to the case of the late Private James M'Gowan or M'Gavan or Murray, who died in Rhodesia, and whose mother is now living in poverty in Longford; whether he is aware that it is believed by deceased's friends that a considerable sum of money, his property, was not accounted for; whether any arrears of pay was due to him in respect of his military service; and, if so, will inquiry be made with a view to its payment to his mother immediately.

(*Answered by Mr. Churchill.*) I have looked into the case. As the hon. Member was informed by letter, dated the 16th October 1903, and 7th June 1904, James Murray's estate was wound up and the balance (£39) forwarded to his heirs, and the Master of the High Court has not been able to find any trace of a sum of £25 0s. 10½d., said to have been in the possession of the deceased at the time of his death; but has offered to render any assistance he can in endeavouring to trace the amount if the relatives will inform him on what ground the inquiry is based. Mrs. Murray was informed in this sense on the 8th of November 1904, and as she has not given any reply it is not possible to take any further steps in the matter. Mrs. Murray was also informed that, as her son deserted from the Rifle Brigade and did not rejoin within three years, any balance due to him from Army funds was forfeited.

Proportion of White Coloured Labour in Transvaal Mines.

MR. MACKARNESS: To ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether his attention has been called to the statement of the Transvaal Government mining engineer, at page 150 of Blue-book Cd. 2819, that the year before the advent of the Chinese there was one white labourer employed in the mines to every five coloured ones, and that the year after their advent there was only one white labourer employed to every eight coloured ones; and whether he has any official information showing any other reason than the advent of the Chinese for the falling off in the proportion of white men employed.

(*Answered by Mr. Churchill.*) The Secretary of State has noticed the statement referred to. While the number of white men employed has increased, the falling off in the proportion they bear to coloured labourers is no doubt due to the increase of unskilled coloured labour, whether Chinese or native.

Lord Selborne and Colonel Davies' Speech at Johannesburg.

MR. BRYN ROBERTS (Carnarvonshire, Eifion): To ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he will obtain definite and authoritative information whether Lord Selbourne made any, and what, protest against the insults levelled in Lord Selborne's presence at the Prime Minister and his supporters by Colonel Davies, of the Imperial Light Horse, in a speech at Johannesburg on the 27th of January last.

(*Answered by Mr. Churchill.*) No, Sir. It would not be desirable to intersperse communications on many grave matters of policy with inquiries of this character. The Secretary of State harbours no doubts of Lord Selborne's personal loyalty to the head of the Government under which he is serving, and will take no course which might seem to imply such suspicions. I would advise the hon. Member to treat such language as that used by Colonel Davies with the same indifference with which I know that the Prime Minister regards it.

Chinese and Kaffir Labour in Transvaal Mines.

MR. L. HASLAM (Monmouth Boroughs): To ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies, with reference to the gradual diminution in the numbers of natives employed during recent months in the South African gold mines, whether there is any difference in the amount of daily wages paid for similar work to the native from the amount paid to the Chinaman; if so, what is the approximate amount paid to the native and to the Chinaman; and if the Chinese are practically compelled to buy what they require from stores under the control of the mine owners at prices fixed by them.

(*Answered by Mr. Churchill.*) The information at the disposal of the Secretary of State does not enable him to make an exact comparison between the daily wages paid to the Chinaman and the Kaffir for all the different classes of work, but from the figures published at page 118 of Cd. 2819 it appears that the average monthly wages for 1905 were for the native £2 11s. 9d., for the Chinaman £1 17s. 7d., respectively. Some explanation of this difference is given at page 115 of Cd. 2819. In regard to the last part of the Question, I would refer the hon. Member to a statement printed at page 3 of Cd. 1986, according to which the prices at the stores on the mines were reasonable, and kept down by competition.

Working Cost of South African Mines.

MR. ROSE (Cambridgeshire, Newmarket): To ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he has any official information to explain the reason why the mining costs of the leading West Australian mines employing only white labour have been reduced to, from 17s. to 25s. a ton including development, the lowest daily wage for unskilled abour being 10s. 6d., rising to 18s. 6d. for skilled men; and is he aware that the working cost of sixty-five of the principal mines in South Africa for December amounted to 22s. 7½d. per ton.

(*Answered by Mr. Churchill.*) I am not in a position to confirm in detail from official statistics the figures as to Western Australian mining, given in the hon. Member's Question. I understand that the average working costs in Western Australia are in excess of 22s. 7½d. per ton, but I notice that the working costs of the Great Fingall Mine are 22s. 7d. for 1905. With regard to the Transvaal mines, it is stated in the Mines Department Report, published in Cd. 2819 (see p. 1671), that the costs of the Rand Mines, Limited, and their working subsidiary companies, for the six months ended 30th June 1905, were 22s. 8d. It must be remembered, however, that the value of the Witwatersrand mines arises less from the richness of the ore than from the extent and regularity of the reef. The average ore value per ton is 70s. in Western Australia, and about 36s. in the Transvaal, and the conditions governing working expenses differ widely in the two Colonies, and it will, therefore, be realised that it is difficult to draw from Western Australian experience deductions which can safely be applied to the Transvaal.

Transvaal—Disenfranchisement for Rebellion.

MR. MITCHELL-THOMSON (Lanarkshire, N.W.): To ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether it is the intention of His Majesty's Government to secure that, under any constitution which may be granted to the Transvaal or Orange River Colonies none of those sentenced for rebellion to a term of disfranchisement shall be enfranchised before the expiry of such term.

(*Answered by Mr. Churchill.*) His Majesty's Government is not at present in a position to give information as to the details of these Constitutions.

Prosecution of Mr. Pless—Reasons for Action of Secretary of State.

Mr. BRIDGEMAN (Shropshire, Oswestry): To ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies what were the considerations which led the Secretary of State for the Colonies on receipt of the Earl of Selborne's dispatch of the 20th November 1905, to telegraph, on the 23rd December 1905, urging the Earl of Selborne to obtain information on which to prosecute some person in connection with the proceedings brought into question by Mr. Boland's allegations, though he had received no affidavit in support of the prosecution, but to delay till 15th February 1906 any recommendation to prosecute Mr. Pless, whose cruelty was sworn to by affidavit contained under cover of the same despatch from the Earl of Selborne of the 20th November 1905.

(*Answered by Mr. Churchill.*) The consideration which caused the Secretary of State to telegraph on 23rd December was the same which caused Mr. Lyttelton to communicate with Lord Selborne earlier in the month in the same sense, as the hon. Member will see by reference to page 20 of Cd. 2819, viz., the desirability of prosecuting any one who might be shown to be guilty by the inquiry. The telegram did not urge Lord Selborne to obtain information, but inquired whether there was sufficient information, and was answered on 10th January by the statement that there was not sufficient evidence for prosecuting Mr. Pless or anyone else. New inquiries were made on the 15th February as to whether it would be practicable to prosecute Mr. Pless. These inquiries are not yet concluded; but as it has now been discovered that Mr. Pless is an American citizen and in China, they cannot be said so far to justify any sanguine expectation of his being brought to trial. Any delay which may have occurred is not due to a sinister motive, as the Question of the hon. Member seems to suggest.

The Training of the Militia.

Mr. RATCLIFF (Staffordshire, Burton): To ask the Secretary of State for War what proportion of men serving in the Militia are estimated to be habitually unemployed during the winter.

Mr. RATCLIFF: To ask the Secretary of State for War if any increased cost is anticipated from his decision to substitute winter for summer training in the case of the twenty Militia battalions.

Lord MORPETH (Birmingham, S.): To ask the Secretary of State for War if the commanding officers of Militia battalions have reported to him that winter, as opposed to summer, training will conduce to the efficiency of their battalions; and if these Reports can be laid upon the Table.

Lord MORPETH: To ask the Secretary of State for War which are the twenty battalions of Militia selected for winter training this year.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) In reply to these Questions will the hon. Members kindly refer to a full reply which I gave on this subject on Thursday 1st instant to Questions put by the hon. and learned Member for Cambridge University and other hon. Members,† in which they will find such information as I am in a position to give to the points now raised. I may add that the sum of £35,000 has been taken in Estimates for 1906–7 for the lengthened recruit drill of the twenty Militia battalions.

Medical Examination of Volunteers—Punishment for Non-compliance.

Mr. McCRAE (Edinburgh, E.) To ask the Secretary of State for War whether the order, or regulation, in War Office Circular of 11th July, 1905, requesting General Officers Commanding to report results of a medical examination of Volunteers under their command as to fitness for active service abroad is still in force; if so, whether it is proposed to countermand the same; further, if he can say if any Volunteers were punished for non-compliance with the order; and what steps will be taken to deal with any such cases.

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† See (4) *Debates*, clii., 1288–90.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) The circular referred to is not now in force. There were a few cases in which Volunteers were punished in connection with this circular. Some of these cases are now receiving the consideration of the Army Council.

The Prime Minister and Colonel Davies.

MR. BRYN ROBERTS: To ask the Secretary of State for War whether his attention has been called to a speech delivered by Colonel Davies, of the Imperial Light Horse, at Johannesburg on the 27th of January last, in which he referred to the First Lord of the Treasury and his supporters as that just and hon. right hon. Gentleman, they could put the name themselves, but it began with C. B., and his satellites, and attributed to them cowardice, scurrility, and falsehood; and whether he proposes to take any, and what, action in the matter.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) I am afraid that my hon. friend is mistaken in supposing that this matter comes within the purview of the Secretary of State for War.

Closing of the Royal Canal.

MR. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick): To ask the President of the Board of Trade whether any application has been made to his Department respecting the closing of that portion of the Royal Canal running from the main waterway to the Broadstone Station; whether, in view of the fact that the whole subject of canals and waterways in Ireland is about to be considered by a Commission which shall report to this House, he will delay giving sanction to closing any portion of the Royal Canal until an opportunity is afforded to take evidence and the opinions of those who are opposed to close up canals in the interest of railway companies.

(*Answered by Mr. Lloyd-George.*) Application has been made by the Midland Great Western Railway Company under Section 45 of The Railway and Canal Traffic Act, 1888, for a warrant of abandonment of the Broadstone branch of the Royal Canal, but, in view of the circumstances to which the hon. Member refers, the consideration of the application will not for the present be proceeded with.

Salaries of Assistant Clerks (New Class).

MR. J. P. NANNETTI (Dublin, College Green): To ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether the recent memorial from Assistant Clerks (New Class), asking that their present salaries be levelled up to what they would have been were the new incremental rate in operation at the commencement of their services, is receiving the attention of the Treasury; and, in view of the fact that a similar concession was granted to the clerks in the Office of Woods a few years ago, and that there are at present Assistant Clerks (New Class) of from six to eleven years service, who are married and otherwise, and who are only in receipt of salaries ranging from £72 to £85 per annum, while new entrants after the 1st April, 1905, will receive salaries ranging from £80 to £105 per annum after similar length of service, a difference of from £8 to £20 per annum, he will take early steps to grant this concession to Assistant Clerks, as little additional expenditure would be involved in so doing.

(*Answered by Mr. McKenna.*) The memorials in question are under consideration and I am not yet able to announce a decision. I may, however, mention that the case of the clerks in the Office of Woods referred to in the Question is not parallel, as was explained by my predecessors in answer to a Question on the 12th July last.†

Overcrowded State of Graveyards in the Highlands.

MR. CATHCART WASON (Orkney and Shetland): To ask the Secretary for Scotland if he will cause inquiry to be made into the overcrowded state of graveyards in the Highlands and Islands; and whether it is within the power of the Congested Districts Board to assist in their enlargement where it is desirable.

(*Answered by Mr. Sinclair.*) It is not within the power of the Congested Districts Board to expend funds at their disposal in the way suggested, but if in any special instances neglect of the statutory authority to do their duty in this respect is reported, suitable action will be taken.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cxlix., 384.

Auditing of Accounts of Parochial Public Charities.

Mr. CLEMENT EDWARDS (Denbigh Districts): To ask the President of the Local Government Board what general powers exist, if any, for the auditing of the accounts of such public charities as may be controlled by parochial trustees, town, district, or parish councils; and whether an annual Return is required to be made of such charities, and in whom resides the power, if any, to compel such Returns being made.

(*Answered by Mr. John Burns.*) Expenditure relating to charities which are included in the accounts of any council whose accounts are subject to audit by a district auditor are audited by that auditor. Except to this extent, the matters referred to in the Question do not come within the province of the Local Government Board, but belong to that of the Charity Commissioners.

Position of Veterinary Inspectors of the Board of Agriculture.

Mr. McKILLOP (Armagh, S.): To ask the hon. Member for South Somerset, as representing the President of the Board of Agriculture, if the veterinary inspectors of the animals division are under the direction of the assistant secretary, or are they on the staff and under the orders of the chief veterinary officer; if under the former is he prepared to place them under the latter.

(*Answered by Sir Edward Strachey.*) The veterinary inspectors of the Board take their instructions from the chief veterinary officer with regard to their professional business, but for certain administrative purposes they work under the direction of the assistant secretary in charge of our animals division. No change is contemplated in these arrangements, which have been in operation for many years past, and have been attended with extremely satisfactory results.

State of Towers at Clickaminn and Mousa, Shetland.

Mr. CATHCART WASON: To ask the First Commissioner of Works if he will have inquiry made into the state of the Pictish towers at Clickaminn and Mousa, Shetland, with a view to their preservation.

(*Answered by Mr. Harcourt.*) The reply is in the affirmative. An officer of the Department is to inspect these towers in the spring or early summer.

Home Office Dock and Wharf Regulations.

Mr. J. HAVELOCK WILSON (Middlesbrough): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he is aware that the dock regulations issue by the Home Department in 1905 for the protection of life and limb are practically inoperative owing to the fact that the present staff of inspectors is not sufficient to cope with the extra work entailed; and whether it is his intention to take the necessary steps at an early date to appoint additional inspectors so that the regulations affecting docks and wharves may be efficiently carried out.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Gladstone.*) I cannot agree that the dock regulations are at present practically inoperative. A great deal of work has been done by the inspectors in enforcing the regulations. It is true that less progress has been made in enforcing compliance on board ship. This is to a large extent unavoidable, but I recognise that the regulations have added very much to the work of the staff in certain districts, and that an increase is necessary. I am now considering what arrangements should be made.

Administration of the Aliens Act.

Mr. LEVY (Leicestershire, Loughborough): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he is aware that five aliens who arrived in London on 29th January, per steamship "Sperber," and who had tickets for America, Canada, or the Argentine, which had been purchased for them in England, were rejected and returned on that account, although each could show at least £5; and whether he will take steps to prevent such an administration of the

Aliens Act in similar circumstances in the future.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Gladstone.*) I can identify three such cases. Inquiry showed that in all of these the tickets had been taken by persons not connected with, and having no authority to act on behalf of or to control the aliens. In one of the two cases for America, the alien, who stated that he had had no intention of going there, would certainly have been rejected there for organic heart disease and returned to this country. In the other case, the alien said that he did not wish to go to America. In the case for the Argentine, the alien did not want to go, and there was no certainty that he would do so. In all three cases the aliens were undesirable within the meaning of the Act. In a fourth case the alien said he wished to go to America, but had no ticket. He suffered from diseases which would certainly have caused his rejection in America, and return to this country with the probability of becoming chargeable on the rates.

Estimated Cost of Reorganising the Army on the North-West Indian Frontier.

SIR H. COTTON (Nottingham, E.): To ask the Secretary of State for India what is the amount of the sanctioned estimate of cost of the scheme of the Commander in Chief in India for reorganising and redistributing the Indian Army on the North-West frontier, and the amount it is proposed to spend annually on this object.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Morley.*) The total cost of the reorganisation scheme sanctioned by my predecessor cannot yet be given with accuracy, but it is estimated at 1,300 lakhs of rupees. It was proposed to spend annually about 300 lakhs on reorganisation, including, besides the Commander-in-Chief's scheme, certain other special measures, independently sanctioned, which will cost in all about 300 lakhs. The matter is under further consideration.

Falsification of Accounts of late Staff Officer Deigan, Royal Irish Constabulary.

MR. J. P. NANNETTI (Dublin, College Green): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland with reference to allege falsifications in the accounts of a deceased staff officer named Deigan in the Royal Irish Constabulary Office, Dublin Castle, (1) what are the dates on which the alleged falsifications, a shown in bank book or books, took place; (2) what are the periods within which the alleged falsifications occurred; (3) how many times during the period covered by the alleged falsifications was the bank book written up, and what was the last date, previous to deceased's death, on which the book was written up by the bank officials; (4) did any audits of the deceased's books take place within the said period, and, if so, during the progress of such audits was the bank book, alleged to be falsified, examined by the auditor, and why was the falsification not discovered; (5) is it the practice to audit at stated intervals the books of officers in deceased's position; (6) if so, why were the deceased's books not audited; (7) and who is the official or officials responsible for the neglect to audit such books.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) (1) The first falsification of the bank book was made immediately prior to 14th September, 1903, after the book had been written up in the bank. (2) Subsequent falsifications were made between that date and 11th December, 1903. (3) The bank book was not written up by the bank officials from 7th September, 1903, until immediately after Mr. Deigan's death on 6th January, 1904, though during this period false entries were made in the book, which entries purported to have been made by officials of the bank. (4) Two examinations of Mr. Deigan's books were made within the period mentioned, at each of which the bank book containing the falsification was produced by him to the examiner. There was nothing at that time to indicate to the examiner that the entries were not genuine. (5), (6), (7) The books of the deceased were duly examined as I have stated, and it cannot be admitted that there was any neglect in the matter.

Religious Tests of Irish National School Teachers.

SIR EDWARD CARSON (Dublin University): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland by whom the appointments of head school teachers in public elementary schools in Ireland are made, and whether any test as to the religion of such teachers is applied.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) I am informed by the Commissioners of National Education that the appointments of all teachers of ordinary national schools in Ireland are made by the local managers of the schools, subject to general conditions as to qualifications, etc., laid down by the Commissioners, a religious test not being one of these conditions.

Teaching of the English Language in Transvaal and Orange River Elementary Schools.

CAPTAIN **HERVEY** (Bury St. Edmunds): To ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies if there will be any clause in the constitution of the Transvaal or Orange River Colony to prevent the exclusion of the British language from the elementary schools.

(*Answered by Mr. Churchill.*) The question of the treatment of the two languages is under consideration in connection with the new constitution. No advantage is likely to be gained by premature and piecemeal statement as to particular clauses.

Proposed Introduction of Indian Labour into the Transvaal.

MR. **REES** (Montgomery Boroughs): To ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the question of the introduction of Indian labour into the Transvaal, under indenture, for employment on railways, is still under consideration; whether in that case the Government of India maintains the demand it made in 1903 for improved treatment of Indian traders and others, as conditions upon the fulfilment of which its consent to such introduction of Indian coolies into the Transvaal would depend, or whether the conditions laid down in 1903 were in 1904 withdrawn.

(*Answered by Mr. Churchill.*) The question of the introduction of Indian labour into the Transvaal may now be said to have lapsed. The conditions of the Indian Government have never been withdrawn.

Re-instatement of Men Discharged from Waltham Abbey Gunpowder Factory.

COLONEL **LOCKWOOD** (Essex, Epping): To ask the Financial Secretary to the War Office whether he can hold out any hope that men discharged from the Royal Gunpowder Factory at Waltham Abbey during the past twelve months will be reinstated during the coming financial year.

(*Answered by Mr. Buchanan.*) I am afraid I am not yet in a position to say whether the orders for the coming year will permit of the re-engagement of men who have been discharged from Waltham Abbey Factory during the past twelve months.

Grants and Allowances to Officers of Cadet Battalions.

MR. **H. H. MARKS** (Kent, Thanet): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether officers of cadet battalions who hold certificates of proficiency and of having passed the Army examinations in tactics are, by the existing Volunteer regulations, deprived of the grants and allowances which officers of Volunteer battalions and units holding similar certificates earn for their corps, although all cadet officers are commissioned as officers in the Volunteer force; whether the examinations passed by officers of cadet battalions holding such certificates are identical with the examinations passed by officers in Volunteer battalions and units; and, if so, whether he will consider the advisability of amending the Volunteer regulations with the object of enabling cadet battalions to draw capitation grants for such of their officers as are in possession of proficiency and other certificates for which capitation grants are authorised in respect of officers serving in Volunteer battalions or units.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) It has been a settled policy that cadet battalions shall not involve the State in any expense beyond the provision of arms and ammunition, and the grant of pay and allowances to officers attending courses of instruction. I do not think that any sufficient reasons are now brought forward to justify any departure from that policy.

Military Manœuvres Act—Draft Order in Council.

SIR EDWARD CARSON: To ask the Secretary of State for War whether it is intended to proceed with the draft Order in Council presented to Parliament under the Military Manœuvres Act, 1897, in the form in which the draft Order now stands; and, if so, when the address under the said Act will be moved.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) It is intended to proceed with this draft Order in Council in its present form, and the Address will be moved as soon as the Order has lain before each House of Parliament for thirty days on which that House is sitting, that is, about the second week in May. The manœuvres will be held in August for the period of that month, as I have already promised a deputation from the county. This month has been selected in order that the views put forward to me by the deputation might be met.

Winter Training of Militia Battalions.

MR. RAWLINSON (Cambridge University): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether he will say during which months the winter training of the twenty Militia battalions is to take place.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) As I stated in my reply to the hon. and learned Member on Thursday last, it is optional for recruits to enlist for this six months training at any time convenient to themselves during the year.

Fines and Forfeitures at Army Clothing Factory, Pimlico.

MR. STUART WORTLEY (Sheffield, Hallam): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether, in a Government store in Pimlico, fines are or recently were imposed and deducted from wages; and, if so, whether it is intended to make in this case, and in any other cases where a like practice may prevail in establishment controlled by the War Office, the same reform as is contemplated in the case of deductions from wages of Chinese labourers in Transvaal mines.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) The right hon. and learned Member is presumably referring to the Army Clothing Department at Pimlico, and to the system of forfeiture of pay for irregularity in attendance. If an employee can prove to the satisfaction of an officer that his lateness was due to some unavoidable cause no deduction is made from his pay. It is not proposed to make any alteration in this system.

Proposed Ministry of Commerce.

MR. FIELD: To ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether the Government will consider the expediency of appointing a Minister of Commerce in conjunction with a consultative committee.

(*Answered by Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman.*) I am well aware of the importance of this subject, but I am afraid that there is no prospect of its being dealt with this session.

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

Admiralty Contracts—Use of Foreign Material.

MR. ARTHUR LEE (Hants, Fareham): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty if he will enumerate the various articles supplied by contractors for the use of the Navy which are required to be of British manufacture or material.

THE SECRETARY TO THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. EDMUND ROBERTSON, Dundee): The list of articles is too long for enumeration, but no alteration has been made in the regulations which obtained under the late Board of Admiralty. No machinery is obtained from abroad with the exception of certain machines of special design which cannot be obtained from British sources, and all steel and other materials are required to be of British manufacture, except in the case of certain brands of foreign steel better adapted to special methods of manufacture in particular cases. As regards other manufactured articles, tenders are invited only from the actual manufacturers, and no foreign firms are admitted to the Admiralty list except for specialities exclusively manufactured abroad. In the case of contracts executed for the Works Department, the contractors are not bound to use British materials.

MR. ARTHUR LEE: Will the right hon. Gentleman be good enough to let me have privately a list of the articles?

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: Certainly.

The "Dreadnought" Trials.

MR. BELLAIRS (Lynn Regis): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether the "Dreadnought's" trials are unlikely to be completed before the end of February, 1907; and, if so, whether the Admiralty will proceed with the commencement of the annual programme without such delay as would be involved if the designs are held over for the completion of the "Dreadnought" trials.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: The "Dreadnought" trials will in all probability be carried out in October, and need not, therefore, be the cause of any delay.

Rosyth Castle.

MAJOR ANSTRUTHER-GRAY (St. Andrews Burghs): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty if his Department proposes to make any use of the ruined castle of Rosyth.

THE CIVIL LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. LAMBERT, Devonshire, South Molton): The question of utilising the ruined castle at Rosyth is under the consideration of the Board of Admiralty. In meantime it has been made weatherproof. Any suggestion which the hon. Member can offer as to its future use will be carefully considered.

Keyham Harbour Works.

MR. H. H. MARKS (Kent, Thanet): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether contractors for harbour works are required to use British granite only; whether British granite only is to be used on the Keyham Harbour works; and whether he will give instructions that all contracts over which the Admiralty has, or may hereafter have, control shall stipulate that only British granite shall be used on such works.

MR. LAMBERT: The Answer to the three parts of the hon. Member's Question is in the negative; with the qualification that the Board of Admiralty cannot fetter their future action.

Indian Government and the Rhodesia Mines.

MR. CATHCART WASON (Orkney and Shetland): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India if the Indian Government refused to consider a proposal for the introduction of Indian miners into Rhodesia, giving as one of its reasons that it did not feel certain that they would be properly treated there; and if the Indian Government refused to allow Indian subjects of the King to enter into engagements to work in the Transvaal mines under the conditions of the Chinese Labour Ordinance.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Mr. JOHN MORLEY, Montrose Burghs): The objection of the Government of India to allowing labourers to be recruited in India for labour (not specially labour in mines) in Rhodesia turned not upon the terms of the contract for coolie labour, but more generally upon the disabilities under which other British Indian subjects laboured, and in particular upon the imposition of a literary test on immigrants, excluding those acquainted only with an Asiatic language. As regards the second paragraph of the Question, I beg to refer my hon. friend to the Answer given by me on the 28th February.†

MR. SCHWANN (Manchester, N.): Is it not the fact that two years ago the then Secretary of State for the Colonies stated that the application of the provisions of the Ordinance with regard to Chinese labour to British Indian subjects would probably be objected to?

MR. JOHN MORLEY asked for notice of the Question.

Spirituous Liquor Manufactures in India.

MR. LAIDLAW (Renfrewshire, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether he will give an assurance that the experts now engaged in the Government of India's investigation into spirituous liquors manufactured in India shall be allowed to complete their work without being restricted by a time limit.

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† (See 4) *Debates*, clii., 1126.

MR. JOHN MORLEY: When the investigation was undertaken in 1904 it was thought that it could be completed within a period of nine months. There is reason to believe that it may be completed very speedily. The Government must have full discretion allowed to them, and I fear I can give no assurance.

Indian Army Organisation.

MR. JOHN MORLEY: With the permission of the House, I should like to make a short statement with reference to Papers which I laid before the House last Monday concerning Army administration in India. I have received a telegram, which I hope the House will allow me to read, as it will conclude the matter raised in those Papers. I received it on Saturday afternoon from Lord Minto—"Military Administration.—I will at once carry out procedure on the lines indicated. Lord Kitchener asks me to say that the Headquarters Staff will do their best to ensure the successful working of the new organisation, and I am confident of the thorough support of my Council."

Alleged Outrage on a British Subject in Manchuria.

SIR W. EVANS GORDON (Tower Hamlets, Stepney): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether the case of Mr. J. E. Geddes, a British subject, who is alleged to have been imprisoned and maltreated by the Russian military and civil authorities in Manchuria, has been brought to his notice; whether any representations and claims for compensation have been made to the Russian Government; and, if so, whether any reply has been received.

THE SECRETARY TO THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. RUNCIMAN, Dewsbury; For Sir E. Grey): The case of Mr. Geddes has been brought to the notice of His Majesty's Government and they are in communication with the Russian Government on the subject, who are making inquiries from their own officers concerned as to the facts. There is reason to believe that until recently the person in question spelt his name as Guedes and that he is of Portuguese extraction.

SIR W. EVANS-GORDON: Is there any evidence to show that Mr. Geddes is not a British subject?

MR. RUNCIMAN: I understand that he is a British subject now.

Case of ex-Police Constable Rolls.

MR. P. W. WILSON (St. Pancras, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if his attention has been directed to the case of William James Rolls, now serving a sentence of five years penal servitude for perjury committed as a policeman; whether his attention has been called to the new facts in reference to this case, which were not known to the Court when Rolls was brought in guilty by the jury; and whether he is prepared to make any statement on the matter.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (MR. GLADSTONE, Leeds, W.): I have myself given the closest attention to the case referred to in the hon. Member's Question, and have had careful inquiries made with regard to the alleged new facts. It is with great regret that I have arrived at the conclusion that the conviction was right and that no ground exists on which I could depart from my predecessor's decision and recommend to His Majesty any interference with the sentence. I have not, in arriving at this decision, relied solely on my own judgment and that of my advisers, but I took the exceptional step of asking the highest judicial authority concerned in the administration of the criminal law, the Lord Chief Justice, to assist me. This he kindly consented to do, and the whole of the papers in this case, including all the appeals made to the Home Office and the Articles which recently appeared in the *Daily News*, were placed in his hands. After fully examining them he has informed me that it is his clear opinion that the conviction was right, and that there is no possible ground for Home Office interference.

MR. P. W. WILSON: I shall put another Question on this.

Women Factory Inspectors in Ireland.

Mr. SLOAN (Belfast, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether, in the proposed increase of women factory inspectors, he will consider the advisability of appointing one for Ireland.

Mr. GLADSTONE: The claims of Ireland will be carefully considered in connection with any arrangements that may be made for strengthening the women inspectors' branch, but I may remind the hon. Member that an additional lady inspector was appointed last year for inspection in Ireland, and is required to reside there during two-thirds of each year. This is in addition to visits which are paid by other members of the branch, the staff of which generally is not attached to particular districts, but is available for inspection throughout the country.

Shop Assistants—Hours of Employment.

Mr. CROOKS (Woolwich): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether the Government has considered the length of the hours of employment of shop assistants, and will introduce legislation reducing those hours to a limit permitted to factories and workshops.

Mr. GLADSTONE: I fear there is no doubt that unduly long hours are worked by the assistants in many shops. But as the hon. Member is no doubt aware, the hours of adult male labour are not regulated in factories and workshops, and to reduce the hours of all shop assistants to the limits now fixed for women and young persons in factories and workshops (a maximum of sixty-eight hours per week, including meal-times) would be a very strong measure and might result in considerable public inconvenience. The hours for the employment of young persons (*i.e.*, those under eighteen) in shops are already limited, by the Acts of 1892 and 1895, to seventy-four per week (including meal times). Indirectly, too, shop assistants may be expected to derive some benefit from closing orders made under the Shop Hours Act, 1905.. I fear I cannot make any statement as to legislation at the present time.

Seats for Female Shop Assistants.

Mr. CROOKS: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he has received any complaints that employers discharge female assistants using the seats provided in accordance with the seats for Shop Assistants Act, 1899; and, if so, whether the Government is prepared to introduced legislation rendering it an offence for female assistants to be dismissed for so doing.

Mr. GLADSTONE: The Shop Seats Act is not administered by the Home Office. Complaints have been made to the local authorities that difficulties have been placed in the way of the use of the seats by the shop assistants. I am not aware how far these complaints are justified. Even if an Act in the terms proposed by the hon. Member were passed, the difficulty of proving the offence under it would, I am advised, be so great as to render it but of little practical advantage.

Mr. CROOKS: Will the Government repeal the Act altogether, so that it may not be used as an excuse for discharging people?

Mr. GLADSTONE: It is really not in my Department. I am not responsible for the administration of the Act, but I will certainly look closely into the whole subject.

Case of Isaak Ilischewitz.

Mr. T. F. RICHARDS (Wolverhampton, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether the case of a Russian named Isaak Ilischewitz, accused of having committed an assault in the East End of London, has been referred to him by the judge before whom the accused was tried to obtain evidence from the Russian Government as to the man's character; and whether, in taking such evidence, he will consult with such responsible countrymen of the accused living in London as may be able to throw light on his antecedents.

Mr. GLADSTONE: The only communication I have received from the court in this case is the certificate under the Aliens Act, recommending expulsion at the expiration of the six months sentence, but I have received a petition on the man's behalf, and I am making inquiry into the case. The hon. Member may rest assured that due consideration will be given to all representations on the prisoner's behalf, before any order is made for his expulsion from this country.

Criminal Investigation Department.

MR. CLEMENT EDWARDS (Denbigh District): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether any member of the Criminal Investigation Department, or prison official, or any person controlled by the Home Office, has a general authority to promise prisoners, undergoing sentence, any remission of their punishment if they will give information tending to bring other persons to justice; and, if no such general authority exists, whether a particular authority is given in special instances, and by whom, and to whom, and under what circumstances.

MR. GLADSTONE: The answer to both Questions is in the negative. No person has any general authority from the Home Office to promise remission of punishment as a reward for giving information tending to bring other persons to justice, and though it is possible that in some particular case authority may have been given to hold out hope of some remission, no recent case of the sort is known. I may say, however, that in some cases a judge in passing sentence has held out hope to a prisoner that he would recommend its reduction if he gave information in the interests of justice.

Miscarriage of Justice at Manchester.

MR. SCHWANN (Manchester, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been drawn to the miscarriage of justice in the case of John Joyce, New Butler Street, Oldham Road, Manchester, who underwent two months' imprisonment with hard labour for the alleged theft of some clothes, although a man who was convicted of the same offence at the same time admitted his own guilt, and stated that Joyce had had nothing to do with it; whether he is aware that Joyce's wife and three children suffered distress and his home was broken up during his incarceration; and whether, seeing that he has received a free pardon, but has been awarded only £25 from the Treasury as compensation for his physical and mental suffering endured, he can make further compensation to him.

MR. GLADSTONE: The case is well known to the Home Office, and the facts are accurately stated in the first part of the question; but I must add that the prisoner did not petition the Secretary of State during his sentence, and that the first my predecessor heard of the case was in an application, made some months after his release. The facts were then investigated, a free pardon was granted, and, as the case appeared to be one of considerable hardship, the Treasury agreed to grant a compassionate gratuity of £25. As Joyce was earning only about 14s. a week at the time of his conviction, and as neither Treasury nor Home Office was in any way concerned in the case, I do not think I should be justified in asking the Treasury to increase the grant.

Aliens Act—Case of Alexander Ouix.

MR. J. R. MACDONALD (Leicester): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he has made further inquiries regarding the steps taken by the immigration officer at Harwich in the case of Alexander Ouix to carry out the purpose of the Aliens Act as regards political refugees; whether any notice was taken of the statement of the deported refugee's companion that Ouix had fled from Russia for a political crime, and whether they were informed of an immigration board to which an appeal could be made; whether an interpreter was employed who could only speak in English and German; and whether he has satisfied himself that the immigration officer at Harwich carried out his duties in a satisfactory way.

MR. GLADSTONE: I have made further inquiry into the case in question. It is quite clear that the immigration officer did all he could to convey to Ouix the fact that he could appeal. Further, he endeavoured to induce the master of the ship to exercise his right to appeal on behalf of Ouix, but without success. But it is not clear that Ouix understood that he had a right of appeal. I have given instructions that immigration officers should be supplied with copies of the notice stating the right of immigrants to appeal printed in all the languages at all likely to be used. I am also considering whether it is possible to establish advisory committees who could assist immigration boards to give full effect to the intention of Parliament as expressed in Section 1, Sub-section (3), of the Aliens Act.

Administration of Aliens Act in London.

MR. LEIF JONES (Westmoreland, Appleby): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been drawn to the case of six political refugees, named Yussa Friedman, Itzig Darchewsky, Rosa Darchewsky, Meyer Ternapolsky, David Cooperberg, and Moses Licht, who arrived in London on 24th February, and were refused permission to land by the Immigration Board; whether he can state on what grounds these immigrants were rejected; and what steps he proposes to take to safeguard the right of asylum for the victims of religious and political persecution.

MR. GLADSTONE: I am informed that in all these cases the ground for rejection was that the immigrants showed no reasonable prospect of maintaining himself or being maintained decently, with additional reason of senility in the case of Cooperberg. As regards the suggestion that these persons were the victims of persecution, it is right to point out that Friedman and Licht said that they had left wives and children in Russia; and in no case was any credible story of persecution or danger told to the Board; in some cases no such suggestion was even made. In no case did the immigrants represent to the Immigration Officer that he was a refugee, nor did the notice of appeal say so, not even in the case of Ternapolsky, who had in his possession letters from England, telling him to say that he had been hiding in a cellar without food or water, had been in great danger, and had had neighbours killed before his eyes; and on no account to say that the £5 which he had with him was not his own.

Notices of Accounts on Railways.

MR. BELL (Derby): On behalf of the hon. Member for Stockport I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he intends to bring in a Bill to enact that the same provisions shall apply in regard to railways for notices of accidents as are now proposed in the case of mines, quarries, factories and workshops.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE, Carnarvon Boroughs): If the proposals referred to as to notices of accidents in mines, factories, etc., are adopted by Parliament, a corresponding change can be made in the definition of a reportable accident, so far as accidents on railways are concerned, by an order under the Regulation of Railways Act, 1871, and legislation for the purpose will therefore not be necessary.

London and North Western Railway—Shunting Engines.

MR. BELL: On behalf of the hon. Member for Stockport, I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether his attention has been drawn to the erection and use of locomotive engines for the purposes of shunting on the London and North Western Railway, which are inimical to the health and safety of the employees on that railway; whether he has power under the Railway (Prevention of Accidents) Act to inquire into, inspect, or prohibit the use of such locomotives until the objectionable features in their construction have been removed.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: If the hon. Member will be good enough to furnish me with particulars of the shunting engines to which he refers, and of the nature of the objectionable features which they possess, I shall be prepared to consider whether the Board of Trade could take any action with regard thereto.

Railway Junction Time Tables.

MR. CLEMENT EDWARDS: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade if he has any power to compel railway companies whose systems meet at a common junction to so time their trains as to secure a minimum of waiting for passengers travelling by the two systems; and, if so, under what circumstances such a power, if any, may be exercised; and, if no such power exists, whether he will consider the advisability of promoting legislation for the acquisition of such powers.

Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE: By the Railway and Canal Traffic Act 1854 (Section 2) Railway Companies are placed under an obligation to forward traffic (including passengers) arriving from other companies lines without any unreasonable delay. Complaints under this enactment are heard and determined by the Railway and Canal Commissioners. If, however, any specific case of the nature referred to by my hon. friend is brought to my notice, the Board of Trade will be glad to consider whether the circumstances would justify them in endeavouring by communication with the Railway Companies concerned to bring about a satisfactory settlement.

Colonial Import Duties on British Manufactures.

Mr. ESSEX (Gloucestershire, Cirencester): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he will have prepared and issued a report showing the import duties levied on British manufactures by the various self-governing and other Colonies and dependencies of the Empire; such return to be similar in form to Cd. 2797.

Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE: A return of the nature referred to is issued annually by the Board of Trade. The last return is dated October, 1905, and bears the number Cd. 2627.

Taff Vale Railway Company.

Mr. BELL: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade if he will take early steps, under the Railways Employment (Prevention of Accidents) Act, 1900, to compel the Taff Vale Railway Company to provide brake vans for the guards working goods and mineral trains over the Penarth and Roath branches of that system, so as to prevent the men from the dangers of having to ride on the buffers and on top of coal and other vehicles.

Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE: The Railway and Canal Commission has decided, as the hon. Member is aware, that the Taff Vale Railway Company is entitled to some exemption on the sections of line in question from the rule requiring the provision of brake vans on trains. The Board accordingly prepared a rule providing for an exemption from the rule, so far as empty trains returning from the docks are concerned, but the railway company have objected that this exemption is not enough, and the matter will probably have to go before the court again. No time will be lost in disposing of the matter.

The Postal Inquiry—Engineering Junior Clerks Association.

Mr. FLYNN (Cork, N.): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether he has received any petition or communication from the Junior Clerks Association of the post office engineering branch in respect to an improvement in the conditions of employment; and whether the Select Committee about to be appointed by the postal authorities will inquire into the claims of this body of public servants.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL (Mr. Sydney Buxton, Tower Hamlets, Poplar): The reference to the Select Committee does not include enquiry into the pay of the clerical force. The petition of the Junior Clerks Association is under consideration.

Underground Cable to Aberdeen.

Mr. CROMBIE (Kincardineshire): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General when he expects to be able to extend to Aberdeen the underground cable now laid between London and Glasgow.

Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON: The laying of the underground cable, owing to financial considerations, can only be done gradually. The Aberdeen extension cannot yet, I fear, be taken in hand.

Motor Cars—Local Speed Regulation.

Mr. CATHCART WASON (Orkney and Shetland): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board if he will issue a circular to the local authorities to the effect that the Local Government Board will consider impartially any application from local authorities to limit the speed of motor cars within their respective districts.

The PRESIDENT of the LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. John Burns, Battersea): I cannot undertake to issue a circular of the kind suggested, but my hon. friend may rest assured that any applications which local authorities may make to the Local Government

Board under the Motor Car Act will be impartially considered.

Local Taxation Grants in Aid.

*LORD HELMSLEY (Yorkshire, N.R., Thirsk): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether, pending fresh legislation on the subject, he will bring in a Bill to amend the Agricultural Rates Act, 1896, so that the amount payable by annual grant to the local taxation account for distribution among each spending authority may be based upon the rates levied in each current year, instead of being based, as at present, on the rates levied in 1896.

MR. JOHN BURNS: No, Sir, I could not undertake to bring in a Bill for the purpose suggested.

Inspection of Cowsheds and Dairies.

MR. LEIF JONES: I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he can see his way to modify the model bye-laws of the Local Government Board for the inspection of dairies and cowsheds, so as to provide that when the medical officer of health or inspector of nuisances is inspecting cattle he shall be accompanied by a properly qualified veterinary surgeon, whose duty it shall be to examine the animals and report thereon.

MR. JOHN BURNS: There is nothing in the Model Regulations to prevent a Local Authority from employing a veterinary surgeon as an officer to inspect cattle in dairies if they wish to do so. But it does not seem to me to be either necessary or desirable to require the medical officer of health or inspector of nuisances when visiting a dairy to be always accompanied by a veterinary surgeon.

The Redistribution Committee.

MR. BOTTOMLEY (Hackney, S.): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he will give the names of the members of the recent Redistribution Committee, with their official positions, if any, and the amounts paid to them respectively in respect of their services upon such Committee.

MR. JOHN BURNS: The members of the Committee were Colonel Johnston, C.B., R.E., late Director General of the Ordnance Survey Department; Mr. Alexander Glen, K.C., and Mr. Howel Thomas, one of the principal clerks of the Local Government Board. The amounts paid to them as remuneration in respect of their services were—Colonel Johnston, £341 5s.; Mr. Glen, £320 5s.; Mr. Howel Thomas, £200.

MR. CROOKS: May I ask whether there are any more "soft jobs" like that going?

MR. JOHN BURNS: In the absence of evidence from the hon. Member that these were "soft jobs," he has no right to assume that those men did not give value for the money paid to them.

MR. BOTTOMELY: The House, then, was wrongly informed the other day, when it was told that no officials of the Local Government Board had received any of the £1,200 voted for the Committee.

MR. JOHN BURNS: It was suggested in the Question put to me that certain moneys included in the £1,200 had been improperly received for services not wholly rendered. I objected to that, and I have now given the actual amounts paid for services which, I am informed, were not only ably, but energetically rendered.

MR. J. WARD (Stoke-on-Trent): Will the right hon. Gentleman give the House an opportunity of judging whether this money was earned by publishing the Report of these gentlemen?

MR. JOHN BURNS: I have already promised that this Report will be laid upon the Table on a very early date, probably to-morrow.

Education Grant—Method of Payment.

MR. BEAUCHAMP (Suffolk, Lowestoft): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education whether it is proposed to discontinue the payment of the annual grant to elementary schools by quarterly instalments; whether any representations have been made by local education authorities against the proposal; and, if so, whether he will consider the desirability of continuing the arrangement at present in force.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION (Mr. BIRRELL, Bristol, N.): I must refer the hon. Member to my reply on Thursday, February 22nd, to a similar Question put to me by the hon. Member for Stoke-on-Trent. I have as yet, nothing to add to that reply.

Board of Agriculture—Inspectors in the Animals Division.

MR. ALEXANDER CROSS: I beg to ask the hon. Member for South Somerset, as representing the President of the Board of Agriculture, if he will state how many lay inspectors there are in the animals division, and if he will grant a Return showing the previous occupation or profession and the salary given in each case respectively, and whether they are all at fixed salaries, and how many are entitled to a pension; and further, will the President state how many veterinary surgeons are employed as temporary inspectors, and furnish a Return of the salary in each case, whether they are at fixed salaries or have prospects of an increase, and if entitled to a pension.

SIR EDWARD STRACHEY (Somerset, S.): The inspecting staff of the animals division, as recently resettled, will consist of forty-seven non-professional inspectors and twenty-three veterinary inspectors of various grades. Of these eleven non-professional and eleven veterinary inspectors will be pensionable. Perhaps the hon. Member will allow me to confer personally with him on the other points to which he refers in his Question.

Smoking Accommodation in Parliament Buildings.

MR. SOAMES, (Norfolk, S.): I beg to ask the First Commissioner of Works whether his attention has been called to the congested state of the writing and smoking rooms in the House; and whether he can see his way to relieving that congestion, either by carrying out the recommendation of the Select Committee on the Accommodation of the House to provide three new rooms on the Terrace front in the basement, or in any other manner.

THE FIRST COMMISSIONER OF WORKS (Mr. HARCOURT, Lancashire, N.E., Rossendale): On this subject I am a poacher turned gamekeeper, but with all the old poaching instincts still remaining. There was a general desire in the last—as in this—Parliament that smoking should be permitted in one of the Libraries. You Mr. Speaker, and your predecessor, hesitated to give the necessary permission without a definite expression of opinion by a vote of the House. This it has previously been impossible to obtain except by the clumsy, and as I now think undesirable method, of reducing the salary of the First Commissioner of Works. To avoid such an unfortunate vehicle of expression I have invented a method by which a plebiscite of the House may be taken. I propose to insert in the Office of Works Vote a sum of £120 for increased smoking accommodation. If this is allowed to stand I shall take it that the House wishes permission for smoking in one of the Libraries: if Members reject the Vote—which they are at liberty to do, as it will be left an open question—the smoking accommodation will remain as it is at present. The desire of the House, as I understand it, is for a silent room in which Members may be allowed to smoke whilst they are reading or writing.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare E.) asked whether the right hon. Gentleman would bear in mind the fact that there were several rooms belonging to the House of Lords quite near which were never used, and would do very well for smoking rooms.

MR. HARCOURT: I have considered that question, but I have no control over the House of Lords.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: There would be no difficulty at all if we approached the Lords politely.

MR. HARCOURT: I will convey the wishes of the hon. Member as politely as possible.

Crofters' Grievances.

MR. JOHN DEWAR (Inverness): I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland if his attention has been directed to the agitation among the crofters and cottars in South Uist and Barra; and if he proposes to introduce legislation at an early day to remedy the grievances complained of.

*THE SECRETARY FOR SCOTLAND (Mr. SINCLAIR, Forfarshire): The proceedings referred to are under my observation. As the hon. Member knows, the Government have announced their intention of amending and extending the Crofters' Act with a view to ameliorating the general condition of the crofter population.

MR. JOHN DEWAR asked whether the Congested Districts Board have made any progress in regard to the settlement of crofters and cottars on lands in South Uist.

*MR. SINCLAIR: The negotiations have been unexpectedly difficult and protracted, but an agreement has now been adjusted for the creation of new holdings on the farms of Kilbride and Glendale. The farm of Gerinish, which the proprietrix is willing to deal with in a similar way, is not out of lease until Whitsunday, 1907.

MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): Are we to understand that a Bill to amend the Crofters Act will be brought in at an early date?

*MR. SINCLAIR: I can give no pledge as to the date.

Argyll and Wigtown Fisheries.

*MR. ASHLEY (Lancashire, Blackpool): I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland whether he proposes to take any steps, by legislation or otherwise, to remove the disability attaching to English trawlers, who are prevented from fishing inside a line drawn from Corsewall Point, in the county of Wigtown, to the Mull of Cantyre, in the County of Argyll, and in other bays on the Scotch coast, while foreign trawlers are free to do so.

*MR. SINCLAIR: It is not proposed at present to consider any action in reference to trawling within these waters, as an appeal which has a bearing upon this subject is now pending in the High Court of Justiciary.

Loch Fyne Fisheries.

MR. ALEXANDER CROSS (Glasgow, Camlachie): I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland whether he is aware of the suffering and loss endured by the fishermen of Loch Fyne in consequence of the failure of the herring fishing; whether he knows that this is believed to be due to the want of any close time for herrings; and whether, having in view that there is no representative on the Scottish Fishery Board representing the interests of the West Coast, he will instruct the officials of that Board to prosecute inquiry, with the view of setting up a close time for herrings.

*MR. SINCLAIR: The failure of the herring fishing in Loch Fyne during last year, and the loss which it has entailed on the fishermen are greatly deplored by the Government. The subject is under the observation of the Fishery Board. It is not clear that such failure is due to the want of a close time. The movements of herrings are well known to be erratic. And the unproductiveness of last year's fishing is believed to represent one of those periods of scarcity which have recurred at intervals off the Scottish Coast, and which would be unaffected by the establishment of a close time. An inquiry is at present being made by the Board's Scientific Department into the migration, etc., of herrings in the Clyde area, the results of which will be made known in due course. It is not the case, as stated in the Question, that there is no representative of the West Coast on the Fishery Board.

MR. ALEXANDER CROSS: Does the right hon. Gentleman know who is the representative of Rothesay on the Fishery Board, and is he aware what are his qualifications for the post?

*MR. SINCLAIR: Yes, Sir.

Firth of Clyde Herring Fishery.

MR. BEALE (Ayrshire, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland whether, in the event of any inquiry being directed into the question of a close time for herrings in the Firth of Clyde, he will direct that the question of the suffering and loss which a close time would inflict on the fishermen of Girvan, Ballantrae, and the Ayrshire coast shall be considered; and that the effects of trawling and of trammel net fishing shall be separately considered.

*MR. SINCLAIR: The subject is under the observation of the Fishery Board, who will, no doubt, bear in mind the points mentioned by my hon. friend.

Cork Spring Assizes.

MR. A. ROCHE (Cork): I beg to ask Mr. Attorney-General for Ireland whether his attention has been called to the fact that the opening of the Cork Spring Assizes has been fixed for St. Patrick's Day; whether a representation has been received by the Irish Government from the Cork Corporation, suggesting that the opening of the assizes should be postponed to Monday, 19th March; and, seeing that St. Patrick's Day is a Government as well as a national holiday, and that the general convenience and the wishes of the public would be consulted by acceding to the suggestion of the Cork Corporation, will the authorities consider the desirability of fixing the opening day for the 19th March.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. CHERRY, Liverpool, Exchange): I am informed that His Majesty's Judges of Assize have postponed the opening of Cork Assizes till 19th March, and that public notice to that effect has been issued since the hon. Member gave notice of this Question.

Case of Tristram Curry, Late of the Recorder's Court.

MR. WILLIAM O'BRIEN (Cork): I beg to ask Mr. Attorney-General for Ireland whether his attention has been called to the circumstances attending the absconding of Tristram Curry, late Registar of the Recorder for the East Riding of Cork, after embezzling trust funds to a considerable amount, lodged with him as officer of the Recorder's Court by various solicitors; will he say whether the defalcations were known in November, and that it was only on the 12th December a warrant was issued for Curry's arrest, he having been seen at his office in the court house in the meantime; what steps, if any, did the Recorder take for the safe custody of trust moneys lodged with his Registrar; whether, failing any action on his part for the protection of suitors to his Court, he will be asked to make good the loss caused by the dishonesty of his officer, or what other measures will be taken to indemnify the clients whose trust funds have been misappropriated, without any contributory negligence on their own part; and what will be done to guard against the recurrence of similar misappropriation in the Recorder's Court for the future.

MR. CHERRY: The Answer to the first paragraph of the Question is in the affirmative. I am informed by the Recorder of Cork that the first complaint in regard to Mr. Curry was received by him on 28th November last. The Recorder at once called on Mr. Curry for an explanation, which Mr. Curry gave on the 30th November, but which, upon inquiry, was found to be not well founded. On the following day the Recorder sent a report of the matter to the Lord Chancellor. On Saturday, 2nd December, the Clerk of the Crown and Peace forwarded to the authorities in Dublin a report as to Mr. Curry's alleged defalcations, amounting to some £1,500. This report was received on Monday, the 4th December, and the matter was at once referred to the local Crown Solicitor for investigation and report, and the opinion of the Law Officers of the Crown was taken. The Report of the Crown Solicitor was received on the 11th of December, and the warrant for Curry's arrest was issued next day. The investment of trust monies in court in the county courts is regulated by Rules of Court, and if those rules were followed, or their observance enforced, it is difficult to say how the loss could have occurred. Proceedings are pending against the sureties of Mr. Curry with a view to securing the indemnification of the suitors against the losses occasioned by his defalcations. Pending such proceedings and the ascertainment of liability of all persons concerned, it would not be possible, and would not be desirable to make any hypothetical statement in reference to the matters mentioned in the Question. The Lord Chancellor and the Rules Committee of County Court Judges have considered the existing Rules of Court and how far they are sufficient to prevent the occurrence of any frauds as distinguished from the non-observance by suitors or solicitors of the rules themselves, and rules are now in preparation which, it is hoped, will prove effectual to this end. The Lord Chancellor has suggested that there should be a public audit of the accounts in each County Court, and that application should be made to the Treasury to sanction the necessary expenses connected therewith.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Louth, N.): Who is responsible for the non-enforcement of the rules?

MR. CHERRY: I believe the solicitors who had the investment of the monies in their hands.

CAPTAIN DONELAN (Cork, E.): Will the right hon. Gentleman direct a public inquiry into the circumstances, as this is a matter of public interest?

MR. CHERRY: I do not think that can be done until after the proceedings against the sureties.

CAPTAIN DONELAN: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that many suitors have been reduced to absolute destitution in consequence of this?

MR. CHERRY: No effort will be spared on behalf of the Government to recover the money for indemnifying the suitors, if it can be done.

Irish Cattle Exports.

CAPTAIN CRAIG (Down, E.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade if any Returns are available showing the number of cattle exported from Ireland to Great Britain during each of the past five years; and, if so, can he state the figures.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. BRYCE, Aberdeen, S.): Perhaps I may be allowed to answer this Question. The Report of Proceedings under the Diseases of Animals Acts—which forms the subject of Parliamentary Paper No. 2609 of last year—contains the figures in question from 1878 to 1904, inclusive. The total number of cattle exported to Great Britain last year was 749,131.

Hickman Estate, West Clare.

MR. HALPIN (Clare, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland for information in reference to the sale of the Hickman estate at Rehy, near Carrigaholt, in West Clare, on 16th August, 1905, when Mr. Charles McDonnell, the agent of Major Hickman, gave a promise in writing that Major Hickman would offer the farm at Rehy, which is in his own, Major Hickman's, hands for purchase to the Estates Commissioners in order to have it divided among the poor tenants on the estate; whether he is aware that on those conditions the tenants agreed to the terms of purchase, the game rights included, and will he say whether Major Hickman or his agent has done anything to carry out his promise to the tenants during the past six months; whether it was with Major Hickman's knowledge and consent that the prosecution was brought against Pat Cahill, who is one of his tenants; and whether, seeing that Mr. Burton of Carrigaholt had no right to prosecute Cahill for shooting on the lands, he will make further inquiries into this case.

MR. BRYCE: The originating application in respect of this estate includes 305 acres of land in the vendor's occupation at Rehy East, which he proposes to sell to the Land Commission for distribution among the tenants of small holdings who are purchasing the remainder of the estate. The Estates Commissioners have no information whether this land includes the farm for killing rabbits upon which Cahill was convicted. The originating application states that the sporting rights to which the vendor is entitled shall be vested in the tenants subject to any rights reserved by deed to the representatives of Mr. H. I. Burton. I have already informed the hon. Member that Cahill was convicted for killing rabbits, not on his own farm, but on a farm in the landlord's possession. The prosecution was at the joint suit of Major Hickman and Mr. C. V. Burton.

Galway Police Charges.

MR JOHN ROCHE (Galway, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the constabulary authorities have made a demand for £566 on the Galway County Council, being the alleged cost of extra police, but which the Council decline to pay; and whether, in view of the peaceable condition of the county, he can state on what ground the constabulary authorities base this demand for the cost of police in excess of the normal number to which the county is entitled.

MR. BRYCE: A claim for £610 has been made against the County Council of Galway in respect of extra police for the half year which ended on 30th September, 1905, and the County Council have, so far, declined to meet the claim. I need hardly say that the matter occurred before His Majesty's present Government came into office; but I am informed that the services of the extra force were necessary for the preservation of the peace in connection with the agitation against the grazing system in the country. No extra police above the established force are now serving in the county.

MR. CHARLES CRAIG (Antrim, S.): In view of the numerous cases of intimidation, boycotting, firing into houses, etc., in County Galway, is it correct to speak of the peaceable condition of the county?

Mr. BRYCE: It is not the case that such offences are very numerous. Compared with previous periods they are comparatively rare.

MR. CONOR O'KELLY (Mayo, N.): Is it not the fact that the cost of the extra police now being charged against Galway has not already been voted for the maintenance of the very same men in other counties? What has become of the money?

MR. BRYCE asked for notice.

MR. CHARLES CRAIG: To what periods of history does the Chief Secretary refer in his Answer to me?

MR. BRYCE: Within the last twenty-five or thirty years.

MR. CONOR O'KELLY: Has the number of police kept at any time within the county in the last year exceeded the total to which the county was declared entitled at the last revision.

MR. BRYCE: I must ask for notice of that Question also.

Irish Land Commission—Distribution of Duties.

MR. O'SHEE (Waterford, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the function of allocating the districts in which the Legal and Lay Assistant Commissioners of the Irish Land Commission shall act has been performed or is now performed by one or more of the Chief Commissioners; if so, by which of them; and whether the same Commissioner or Commissioners determine which of the Lay Assistant Commissioners shall act as Sub-Commissioners, as Assessors on the hearing of appeals to the Chief Commission, or as Inspectors under the Estates Commissioners.

MR. BRYCE: The allocation of the several Assistant Commissioners to the special duties upon which they are engaged receives the consideration of all the members of the Land Commission. The duty of assigning the Assistant Commissioners engaged in fixing judicial rents to their particular districts devolves upon one of the Judicial Commissioners, who may for the time being be dealing with the matter. The list of Lay Assessors was framed by the Judicial Commissioners with the approval of the Lord-Lieutenant and the Treasury, in accordance with the provisions of the General Orders made under the Act of 1903. In land purchase cases, the Land Commission, or the Estates Commissioners, as the case may be, select the Inspectors for the duty of visiting and reporting on the holdings concerned.

Irish Land Purchase—Collection of Interest and Instalments.

MR. O'SHEE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland how many letters of application to tenant purchasers under the Irish Land Act, 1903, for the collection of interest on, or instalments of annuities, of their purchase money have been issued up to date by the solicitor of the Irish Land Commission; how many civil bills and writs of summons have been issued in respect of such interest and instalments; and whether the Estates Commissioners will decline to sanction advances for the purchase of holdings in cases in which the tenants submit to them evidence of the vendors having shortly prior to the signature of the purchase agreements brought pressure to bear on the tenants to compel them to pay arrears of rent, other than the current year's rent, which the vendors had not sought to collect by means of legal proceedings until the negotiations for a sale to their tenants had begun.

MR. BRYCE: The Estates Commissioners are unable to reply to the first inquiry, as no record of the number of circulars issued is kept. On the 1st May, 1905, which is the last gale day in respect of which legal proceedings have been taken, there were about 53,000 payers of interest under the Act of 1896, and of interest or rent under the Act of 1903, all of whom paid on application with the exception of 1,155, against whom writs or civil bills were issued. Eight hundred and fifty of these paid before the cases came before the different courts. Ninety-one cases are still outstanding in respect of which the Sheriffs have not yet made returns. Similarly, on the 1st June, 1905, being the last gale day in respect of which legal proceedings for annuities have been taken, the number of payers was 12,901, all of whom paid on application with the exception of ninety-three, against whom writs or civil bills were issued. Sixty-six of these paid before the cases came up for hearing. Eleven cases are still outstanding. The Estates Commissioners will consider any evidence which comes before them of duress brought to bear on tenants to compel them to sign purchase agreements, and will take such action as they may consider just and within the powers vested in them by law.

Mrs. Eliza Williams' Youghal Estate.

MR. O'SHEE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether an originating application in connection with the estate of Mrs. Eliza Williams, situate in the county of Waterford, near Youghal, was lodged with the Estates Commissioners in or about August last; whether he is aware that the tenants in the estate formerly numbered three, viz., John Power, John Sullivan, and Mrs. Lombard; that the two first-named were evicted, and that John Power's eviction was for non-payment of the yearly rent of £118 11s., and took place after the Land Sub-Commission had made an order reducing the rent to £82, and while an appeal by the landlord was pending against the order of the Sub-Commission; whether he is aware that the agent, Mr. Wills Purcell, has become tenant of the evicted lands, and signed an agreement to purchase same, which has been lodged with the Estates Commissioners; and whether the Estates Commissioners will take steps without delay to inquire into the circumstances, and, if possible, to secure the restoration of the evicted tenants.

MR. BRYCE: The Estates Commissioners inform me that an originating application in respect of this estate was lodged with them on the 30th August, 1905, the proposed purchasers being Mr. W. W. Purcell in respect of 123 acres, and Mr. F. Lombard in respect of thirty acres. The case has not yet been dealt with by the Commissioners, but when dealing with it they will carefully consider and inquire into the application of John Power and any other evicted tenant who may make application for reinstatement. I cannot enter into the consideration of the circumstances attending the eviction of John Power, which, I understand, took place in 1889; but the Commissioners will doubtless inquire into all the circumstances.

Leahy's Estate, Cahirciveen.

MR. BOLAND (Kerry, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the attention of the Estates Commissioners has been called to the circumstances under which negotiations for the sale of the J. W. Leahy Estate at Aghatubrid, Cahirciveen, have been carried on; and whether a sale of this estate will be sanctioned at twenty-three years' purchase on what are really first-term rents, in view of the fact that the tenants were compelled to sign purchase agreements, through being threatened with a claim for so-called arrears.

MR. BRYCE: The Estates Commissioners inform me that seventeen agreements for purchase in respect of this estate have been lodged. In three of these cases in which judicial rents have been fixed since 1896, the average number of years' purchase is twenty-three. The Commissioners have no knowledge of the circumstances under which the negotiations for sale were carried on, nor have they any information that duress was used against the tenants.

If any complaint to that effect should be made to them, they would investigate the matter before sanctioning the advances.

Land Commission and the Labourers' Acts.

MR. T. L. CORBETT: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the delay of the Land Commission in sub-dividing the holdings under the Labourers' Acts, and so hindering the provision of sanitary accommodation for the labourers; and what steps he proposes taking to remedy this delay.

MR. BRYCE: It is assumed that the hon. Member refers to cases in which rural district councils acquire, for the purposes of the Labourers' Acts, lands which form portions of holdings subject to the payment of land purchase annuities. I am informed by the Land Commission that in all such cases they perform their statutory duty of apportioning the future payment of the annuities and communicate their decision to the parties interested with as little delay as possible.

Bangor (County Down) Post Office.

MR. T. L. CORBETT: I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether he has come to any decision as to the site of the new post office for Bangor, County Down.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: An offer has been received which is now under consideration, to build a new Office at the corner of Main Street and Castle Square.

Ballylinan (Queen's County) Postal Service.

MR. MEEHAN (Queen's County, Leix): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General if he is aware that telegrams addressed to different parts of the district served by Ballylinan, Queen's County, post office, are frequently delayed, and if received in the afternoon are not delivered until the following day; and that there is but one telegraph messenger, who has to walk, the longest distance about six miles; and will arrangements be made for a more expeditious service, and will the messenger be provided with a bicycle.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: I am assured that it is not the case that telegrams for delivery from Ballylinan are delayed or kept over till the following day. There is, normally, one regular telegraph messenger employed at Ballylinan, but at the present time the place is vacant. Sufficient casual messengers are, however, available. No complaints in reference to the delivery service have been received, but I will consider whether the supply of a bicycle would be justified.

Stradbally and Luggacurran Letter Deliveries.

MR. MEEHAN: I beg to ask the Postmaster-General if he is aware that the postman delivering letters between Stradbally and Luggacurran commences duty at 9.15 a.m., is due to arrive at Luggacurran at 12.45, walking a distance of 10¼ miles in 3½ hours; that he starts on return journey at 5.10 p.m., arriving at Stradbally at 7.15 p.m., a distance of 6½ miles in 2¼ hours; that the outward journey has recently been increased by including a district not previously served by him, with the consequent delay of letters at Luggacurran; and whether, seeing that there is a sub post office only one mile from the houses served by the inclusion of the added district, the present arrangement will be altered to insure an earlier delivery at Luggacurran; is he aware that the present postman has twenty-seven years' service without an unfavourable record; will he say what is the amount of his weekly wage; and will he be in future provided with some mode of conveyance, especially during the winter months.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: Inquiries are being made on this subject, and I will communicate with the hon. Member as soon as they are completed.

Ireland and the Canal Commission.

MR. GINNELL (Westmeath, N.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade will the proposed Inland Navigation Commission extend its operation to Ireland; if so, will the Commissioners hold a sitting in Dublin and summon evidence with reference to the Royal Canal; will he take immediate steps to prevent the filling up of any portion of that canal by the Midland Great Western Railway Company; and will he require that company to execute the works specified as necessary to navigation on that canal by

Major Marindin in his Report of 23rd August, 1895.

Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE: The Royal Commission will deal with Irish Canals, and will no doubt take such steps as may seem necessary to them in the conduct of their inquiry to obtain any information they desire as to the Royal Canal. In the meantime, as stated in my reply to the hon. Member for the Blackrock Division of Dublin, the consideration of the proposed abandonment of a portion of that canal will not be proceeded with. The Board of Trade have no powers which would enable them to require the Midland Great Western Railway Company to carry out improvements, but it was understood that the company took steps some years since to remedy the defects pointed out by Sir Francis Marindin.

Motor Car Commission.

Mr. ROSE (Cambridgeshire, Newmarket): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury when the Report of the Motor Car Commission is likely to be received.

The PRIME MINISTER and FIRST LORD of the TREASURY (Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman, Stirling Burghs): I am told by Lord Selby, the Chairman of the Commission, that he is not in a position to say when the Report will be issued.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.—THE FISCAL DEBATE.

Mr. AKERS-DOUGLAS (Kent, St. Augustine's): May I ask the Government intentions as to the course of business?

Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The course of business for the next two or three days has been rather disturbed by information received since I came into the House. We have been looking forward to the fiscal debate taking place on Thursday. Now I am told that neither the Member for the City of London nor the Member for West Birmingham can be in his place on Thursday, and the debate must be put off until Monday, the 12th. In that case the Government must make the best arrangement they can. I do not know whether the House in these peculiar circumstances will agree to take the Army Estimates on Thursday, the Government undertaking that the Ministerial statement relating to Army Estimates shall be in the hands of Members on Tuesday night, and the Estimates themselves circulated on Wednesday morning. I admit this is short notice, but I think, in the dilemma in which we are placed, the House may possibly agree to that course.

Mr. AKERS-DOUGLAS: I fully realise the difficulty. So far as the Opposition are concerned we accept the arrangement.

NEW MEMBER SWORN.

Charles Joseph Dolan, esquire, for the County of Leitrim (North Leitrim Division).

NEW BILLS.

SCHOOL BOARD ELECTORATE (SCOTLAND) BILL.

"To admit to the School Board Electorate of Scotland persons entitled to vote for the County Council Election," presented by Mr. Weir; supported by Mr. Alpheus C. Morton, Mr. John Dewar, Mr. Leicester Harmsworth, Mr. Ainsworth, Mr. Cathcart Wason, Mr. J. A. Bryce, and Mr. A. Williamson; to be read a second time upon Friday, 30th March, and to be printed. [Bill 67.]

DOGS (PROTECTION) BILL.

"To prohibit Experiments upon Dogs," presented by Mr. Ellis Griffith; supported by Colonel Lockwood, Mr. Channing, Mr. Field, Mr. Weir, Mr. Sloan, Mr. Tomkinson, Mr. Crooks, Mr. Clement Edwards, Mr. Swift MacNeill, and Colonel Sandys; to be read a second time upon Thursday next, and to be printed. [Bill 68.]

HOUSE OF COMMONS (PROCEDURE).

The Select Committee on House of Commons (Procedure) was nominated of, Mr. Blake, Mr. Charles Craig, Mr. Akers-Douglas, Mr. John Ellis, Mr. Samuel Evans, Mr. H. W. Forster, Sir Henry Fowler, Mr. Keir Hardie, Mr. Laurence Hardy, Sir Joseph Leese, Mr. M'Crae, Mr. William Redmond, Mr. J. H. Whitley, Mr. Wood, and Sir James Woodhouse.

Ordered, That the Committee have power to send for persons, papers, and records.

Ordered, That the Committee have power to report from time to time.

Ordered, That Five be the quorum. —(*Mr. George Whitley.*)

PUBLIC PETITIONS.

The Select Committee on Public Petitions was nominated of, Mr. E. Barry, Mr. Burt, Mr. Ellis Griffith, Mr. Leicester Harmsworth, Mr. Henniker Heaton, Colonel Kenyon-Slaney, Colonel Legge, Mr. M'Arthur, Mr. T. P. O'Connor, Mr. J. W. Philipps, Mr. Charles Shaw, Lord Willoughby de Eresby, Mr. Wills, and Mr. Henry J. Wilson.

Ordered, That Three be the Quorum. —(*Mr George Whiteley.*)

SUPPLY [1ST ALLOTTED DAY].

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. EMMOTT (Oldham) in the Chair.]

CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS ESTIMATES, 1906–7 (VOTE ON ACCOUNT).

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £21,410,000, be granted to His Majesty, on account, for or towards defraying the charges for the following Civil Services and Revenue Departments for the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1907, viz. :—

CIVIL SERVICES.

CLASS II.

United Kingdom and England :—	£
Home Office - - - - -	66,000

CLASS V.

Diplomatic and Consular Services - - - - -	250,000

CLASS II.

United Kingdom and England :—

Local Government Board -	86,000

CLASS I.

	£
Royal Palaces - - - -	20,000
Osborne - - - -	8,000
Royal Parks and Pleasure Gardens - - - -	45,000
Houses of Parliament Buildings - - - - -	20,000
Miscellaneous Legal Buildings, Great Britain - -	30,000
Art and Science Buildings, Great Britain - - -	25,000
Diplomatic and Consular Buildings - - - -	54,000
Revenue Buildings - -	196,000
Public Buildings, Great Britain - - - -	200,000
Surveys of the United Kingdom - - - - -	90,000
Harbours under the Board of Trade - - - -	6,000
Peterhead Harbour - -	10,000
Rates on Government Property - - - -	295,000
Public Works and Buildings, Ireland - - - -	110,000
Railways, Ireland - - -	35,000

CLASS II.

UNITED KINGDOM AND ENGLAND.

House of Lords Offices - -	7,000
House of Commons Offices -	15,000
Treasury and Subordinate Departments - - -	40,000
Foreign Office - - -	24,000
Colonial Office - - -	25,000
Privy Council Office, etc. -	4,000
Board of Trade - - -	85,000
Mercantile Marine Services	32,000
Bankruptcy Department of the Board of Trade - -	3
Board of Agriculture and Fisheries - - - -	55,000
Charity Commission - -	15,000
Civil Service Commission -	17,000
Exchequer and Audit Department - - - -	25,000
Friendly Societies Registry -	3,000
Lunacy Commission - -	5,000
Mint (including Coinage) -	5
National Debt Office - -	6,000
Public Record Office - -	10,000
Public Works Loan Commission - - - -	1,000
Registrar-General's Office -	15,000
Stationery and Printing -	330,000
Woods, Forests, etc., Office of	8,000
Works and Public Buildings, Office of - - - -	34,000
Secret Service - - -	40,000

SCOTLAND.

	£
Secretary for Scotland, Office of	25,000
Fishery Board	5,000
Lunacy Commission	2,500
Registrar-General's Office	1,500
Local Government Board	5,000

IRELAND.

Lord-Lieutenant's Household	2,000
Chief Secretary for Ireland	12,000
Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction	80,000
Charitable Donations and Bequests Office	1,000
Local Government Board	25,000
Public Record Office	2,000
Public Works Office	16,000
Registrar-General's Office	5,000
Valuation and Boundary Survey	6,000

CLASS III.

UNITED KINGDOM AND ENGLAND.

Law Charges	40,000
Miscellaneous Legal Expenses	28,000
Supreme Court of Judicature	140,000
Land Registry	18,000
County Courts	5
Police, England and Wales	13,000
Prisons, England and the Colonies	340,000
Reformatory and Industrial Schools, Great Britain	130,000
Broadmoor Criminal Lunatic Asylum	12,000

SCOTLAND.

Law Charges and Courts of Law	30,000
Register House, Edinburgh	15,000
Crofters Commission, Scotland	2,000
Prisons, Scotland	37,000

IRELAND.

Law Charges and Criminal Prosecutions	30,000
Supreme Court of Judicature, and other Legal Departments	43,000
Land Commission	90,000
County Court Officers, &c.	45,000
Dublin Metropolitan Police	60,000
Royal Irish Constabulary	600,000
Prisons, Ireland	52,000
Reformatory and Industrial Schools	55,000
Dundrum Criminal Lunatic Asylum	4,000

CLASS IV.

UNITED KINGDOM AND ENGLAND.

	£
Board of Education	7,000,000
British Museum	70,000
National Gallery	10,000
National Portrait Gallery	3,000
Wallace Collection	3,000
Scientific Investigation, &c.	24,000
Universities and Colleges, Great Britain, and Intermediate Education, Wales	60,000

SCOTLAND.

Public Education	850,000
National Gallery	5,000

IRELAND.

Public Education	760,000
Endowed Schools Commissioners	400
National Gallery	2,500
Queen's Colleges	2,500

CLASS V.

Colonial Services	370,000
Telegraph Subsidies and Pacific Cable	30,000
Cyprus (Grant in Aid)	27,000

CLASS VI.

Superannuation and Retired Allowances	300,000
Miscellaneous Charitable and other Allowances	1,150
Hospitals and Charities, Ireland	17,000
Savings Banks and Friendly Societies Deficiencies	– –

CLASS VII.

Temporary Commissions	20,000
Miscellaneous Expenses	10,437
Repayments to the Local Loans Fund	– –
Ireland Development Grant	100,000
Total for Civil Services	£13,980,000

REVENUE DEPARTMENTS.

Customs	350,000
Inland Revenue	830,000
Post Office	6,250,000
Total for Revenue Departments	£7,430,000
Grand Total	£21,410,000."

* MR. H. J. TENNANT (Berwickshire) said that he proposed to move a reduction of the Vote by £100 in order to give the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary an opportunity of making a statement on two important matters connected with the administration of his Department now ripe for his decision. The question he proposed first to bring under the notice of the Committee was connected with the by-laws issued by the London County Council under the Employment of Children Act. Under this Act, which was passed three years ago, local authorities were required to make certain by-laws and to submit them for confirmation to the Home Office, which was given power to hold an inquiry into the subject. The London County Council submitted their proposed by-laws to the Home Office more than two years ago, and he complained that these by-laws were still under the consideration of the Department. He was quite aware that his right hon. friend was not responsible for that; but still he was entitled to express his opinion that the inaction of the Home Office had been most unfortunate. The most important points raised in the by-laws were street trading by girls under sixteen years of age, the hours of employment of children of school age, and the employment of children in barbers' shops. With regard to the last-named they had to remember that these barbers shops usually were badly ventilated, that much bad language was used in many of them, and that not a few were merely betting dens whither bookmakers resorted, were, in fact, chiefly kept open for that purpose. He was aware that Mr. Chester Jones informed the Home Office and the public in his Report that he was not convinced that this was the case, but the reading of that Report certainly had not carried to his mind the conviction that the facts were not as stated. Indeed, he had seldom read a Report which, to his mind, was more unfortunately conceived and executed. The next point was as to the hours of employment of children of school age. How could these children, who had been well described by the Member for Northampton as "the trustees of posterity," derive profit from their schooling under the conditions which Mr. Chester Jones in his Report appeared to approve? They were permitted to begin delivering milk or papers at 6 a.m., and would go home to breakfast at 8.30, having, it may be, to walk a mile and begin their schooling at nine. Then after school they were allowed to go on working till nine o'clock so that it would be ten o'clock before they got to bed! How could they expect such children to become strong, useful and healthy citizens? Again, there was the question of street trading by girls under sixteen years of age. Three years ago in the Committee upstairs he was successful in carrying an Amendment prohibiting street trading by girls under sixteen, but unfortunately on the Report Stage he was defeated on that point. Expert opinion which he was able to quote at the time was very strongly in favour of the prohibition. Witnesses for great cities like Liverpool, Manchester, Glasgow, Edinburgh, Dublin and Birmingham, all appealed for prohibition. What did they say? They declared that it constituted "a considerable danger to the girls, who came so utterly to the bad." It unfitted them entirely for any other form of employment. The Chief Constable of Birmingham said "once a street trader, always a street trader." He wished the House would bear that in mind. He could not think it would willingly condemn these poor children to such a life from which there was so little probability of escape. Mr. Chester Jones in his Report had failed entirely to realise the intentions of Parliament. Parliament certainly appreciated the danger to morals; but behind all that there was the devastating influence of the street on character and industry. This danger had entirely escaped Mr. Chester Jones. In the course of the debate to which he was referring, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the St. Augustine Division of Kent, who was then Home Secretary, said he did not suppose that the local authorities would fail to make proper by-laws, and he added that those authorities knew best what was good for the children in their districts. That might be so; indeed, he was prepared to maintain that many had shown they were anxious to safeguard the interests of the children. What had been the action of the London County Council? Originally it asked that it should be empowered to prohibit altogether street trading by girls under sixteen, and it was on the suggestion of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for St. Augustine's that they put in a provision that children

might be so engaged if accompanied by a parent. He earnestly hoped the right hon. Gentleman who was now at the head of the Home Office and his advisers would allow the Council to revert to their original intention in this matter. He could not believe that the right hon. Gentleman would allow himself to be led away by a Report unillumined by any ray of sympathy or imagination. Perhaps he ought not to say "imagination," for Mr. Chester Jones declared that the opposition to the by-laws had been most faint-hearted, and again—

> "The lack of opposition may have been due to some cause of which I am not aware."

Such was the character of Mr. Chester Jones's imagination. And what was his advice? It was that these children, the future mothers of our race, should have no obstacle put in their path, but should be permitted to run their unimpeded course in the gutters of our highways.

The second subject with which he proposed to deal had regard to the new scheme of examination for inspectorships under the Factory Act, for which he knew his right hon. friend was not responsible. Some hon. friends of his might say that it was only a detail. That he admitted to the full, but efficiency of administration, after all, depended in great measure on details. Formerly there were eight subjects for examination, of which six were compulsory. Now there were eleven, of which only two—English composition and arithmetic—were compulsory. Two others—sanitary science and factory law—were deferred for two years, but neither mathematics, economics, chemistry, physics, mechanics or the history of industrial and social legislation were to be taken compulsorily by the candidate. But how was an inspector who was deficient in the knowledge of those subjects to do his duty? It was absolutely essential, in his opinion, that he should have such knowledge. His right hon. friend told him that the examination now was only in book knowledge, and that they would acquire experience which in factory law and sanitary science could be tested. Where was he to learn physics? Was it to be in the laboratories of the employers? He thought it very unfortunate that this experiment should be made. Take the case of an inspector ignorant of mechanics. Was he to wait to gain his experience until, a safety valve failing to operate, a number of workmen had been sent to their death. How could they expect an inspector to conduct a prosecution for failure to fence complicated and dangerous machinery unless he knew something about mechanism! This Department was indeed a very important one. The figures for 1904, which were the last available, showed that in this country there were 257,130 factories and workshops, docks, warehouses, etc., an increase of 3,246 over 1903. The persons employed numbered roughly 4,250,000. The total number of inspectors was 154, so that for each inspector there were 28,217 people employed. It might be said that the Department had grown rapidly seeing that in 1894 there were only 100 inspectors, but since that year the number of factories and work shops had grown from 169,849 to 257,130. In 1904, 93,968 accidents were reported to the Department. Thus it would be seen that this was a most important Department. Some of the members of the staff were his personal friends. For thirteen years he had carefully watched the discharge of the multifarious and onerous duties of the Department, which he submitted were discharged in a manner which commanded the admiration of the House. It was of vital importance that they should not in any way impair the efficiency of this overworked Department which was the guardian of the lives, limbs and liberties, of 4,250,000 of His Majesty's subjects. What were they going to do by this new system? Two alternatives would be open under it. Either these novices and tyros would have to be accompanied in their rounds by experienced inspectors, or else they would have to do their work at their own sweet will, and would inevitably bring the Department and the administration of the law into contempt. At the very time when increased efficiency was demanded, when they were increasing their demands on employers could they approve such a change? Every new reform would be regarded with suspicion, and every new act might be met with hostility; they would be laying up a store of enmity which would cripple the administration and hamper the usefulness of the Department, and the right hon. Gentleman would be driven back on the path beaten and caked with the footmarks of his predecessors—the path of the line of least resistance. He earnestly appealed to his right hon. friend to eschew this path and to adopt a course of bold and vigorous reform.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Item, Class 2, Vote 4 (Home Office), be reduced by £100."—(*Mr. H. J. Tennant.*)

*Mr. J. R. MACDONALD (Leicester) said the matters which the hon. Member opposite had brought before the House were undoubtedly matters of detail, but as had been truly observed, it was just in so far as these matters of detail were successfully dealt with by the Home Office that that Department's credit would stand. It would be unnecessary for them to push very hard the first subject raised by the hon. Member for Berwickshire. They knew that the right hon. Gentleman was not responsible for that extraordinary delay by which a simple code of by-laws, drafted by a very responsible authority after full investigation and after having been examined by two of its most important committees, had been allowed to lie for two years on somebody's table at the Home Office; and then were made the subject of another exhaustive inquiry. He had confidence that the right hon. Gentleman would be able to satisfy the County Council upon this matter. He should like to emphasise on behalf of those associated with him one important point. At the present moment we are face to face with the unemployed problem, and those who had studied that problem in detail had come to the conclusion that there was no more prolific source of unemployment than allowing boys and girls to go on to the streets after school hours to earn money as street traders. If the Home Secretary inquired into that subject he would find that the welfare not merely of the children themselves, but of the nation, would depend on a wise and active administration of some by-law prohibiting street trading as far as it could be prohibited. He had lived in hope that when the Home Secretary came into office and discovered the extraordinary syllabus issued in January this year, which had altered the character of our factory inspectors, the right hon. Gentleman would assert his authority and order it to be held over until he had had time to hold an inquiry into its meaning, operation, and design. He would venture to show why the Home Secretary should revise his opinion as regards that syllabus. Factory inspectors as soon as they were appointed enjoyed a salary of £200 and were entitled to enter factories and examine the conditions existing in them. They had to decide whether machines were dangerous or not after only a few days of passing their examination in which they might say, according to the syllabus, that they were absolutely ignorant of everything connected with machines. The inspector might have to examine into the causes of accidents—causes of which he might confess in his examination to be absolutely ignorant; he might have to decide on the efficiency or inefficiency of structures; he had to examine dangerous processes and come to conclusions regarding them, and he had to prosecute, or make himself responsible for prosecutions, under reports given to the Home Office by his subordinates. These gentlemen, armed with this authority and charged with the responsibility of this office, might declare, according to the subjects he had chosen in his examination, that he was ignorant of practical mechanics, ignorant of physics, and ignorant of chemistry. There were only two obligatory subjects, English composition—which only amounted to essay writing on any subject under the sun—and arithmetic, which was equal to the fourth standard which he had to pass at school thirty years ago. There were four subjects he could take from among eight—English literature from Shakespeare to Wordsworth—he was glad that the Home Office had not abandoned hope of having poets among the mechanical workers—English history, which must relate to factory legislation—general modern history, such as the history of the civilised world from the beginning of the sixteenth to the end of the nineteenth century, and either French, German, or Italian. If he was not educated in the modern languages he could take higher mathematics. This extraordinary syllabus eliminated every possible subject that had a practical bearing on the work of the office for which the candidate was sitting. There was not a single test placed upon a theoretical knowledge of the practical work, or upon the operations of the practical work itself. By this curious arrangement a young student coming down from the university could pass this examination without any supplementary study. If the Home Secretary would examine this syllabus and compare it with the ordinary class work, at Oxford particularly, he would discover that the questions which the student had most at his finger ends when he left the university were just the questions which enabled him to scrape through and become a fully qualified factory inspector. That was not a heightening of the standard, for the Labour Members would be the last, on account of their experience of factory inspection and the great interest involved, to hinder the right hon. Gentleman in making the standard of examination higher and more efficient with a view to the work being better done by the inspectors, but they would strongly oppose any step which would earmark the position of factory inspector to a certain small class, which was really the effect of the promulgation of this syllabus. Then there was the age reservation, under which in the case of the manager of a factory the age might be raised. Fancy asking the manager of a factory to pass a general examination in the history of the civilised world from the sixteenth to the nineteenth century, or to answer a paper in advanced geometry. To ask a man who was claiming exemption under that addendum to sit down and pass an examination like that was simply insulting the whole class to which he belonged. Then they wanted general education as well as detailed knowledge. The Labour Party would not object to that, but it was surely a very severe reflection upon working classes that general education could only be had inside a university. The general education necessary for an efficient factory inspector, in his opinion, was better obtained outside than inside a university. As a matter of fact at the present time, owing to polytechnics and an excellent system of evening technical education, combined with a revised system of apprenticeship, they were making it more possible for the sons of the working classes to enter those responsible positions of the State and fill them with credit, but this purely academical and theoretical university and collegiate syllabus was putting a premium upon book learning, and making it impossible for a man with a practical knowledge of factory theory and practice to compete with young men just leaving Oxford and Cambridge. He might say that when he was in Johannesburg he met almost the whole of Balliol University, and the only justification given him was that under circumstances such as existed there, the administrators were said to require a very general knowledge and a general education. Every single one of those gentlemen had been an absolute failure [Cries of "No, no!"]. Perhaps there was one exception, but with one exception the whole of the Balliol kindergarten in South Africa had been a failure. The right hon. Gentleman was proceeding precisely on the same lines as those responsible for the Transvaal acted upon immediately after the war, and he ventured to prophesy that if the experiment was conducted for three or four years the same disastrous results would have to be recorded at the Factory Department of the Home Office. These men when appointed were handed over to subordinates, and the time of the subordinates was taken up looking after them. These very men, who had not the opportunity of becoming full inspectors, had to coach the men who were appointed to the full inspectorships. It was impossible for the right hon. Gentleman to arrange it otherwise, but he said he was going to give two years probation. That was nothing new. They had two years probation now. As a matter of fact, in a Supplementary Memorandum which was issued the two years probation was extended, and what he was afraid of was that this also was going to continue. At the end of two years the Home Secretary might say, "I am willing to extend the probationary period for the inspectors who have not been satisfactory." Were they going to have the two years extended as it was possible to extend them now? Were these theoretical gentlemen to be kept permanently on the factory inspector staff? He thought that was exceedingly unfair to employers. The Labour Party were anxious to act in the fairest way they could towards employers, and it was certainly unfair that employers who were doing their best to meet the requirements of the Home Office should have their factories inspected by men who had no practical knowledge of what was going on in the factories. Decent employers of labour should make a strong protest against this attempt to use the factories as schools for university men who received appointments as inspectors. There never was a happier hunting ground provided by the ratepayers for people who were able to send their sons to be educated at Oxford, and whose idea of respectable occupation was that they should turn their attention to the Civil Service. This was an expression of the tendency which had been going on for some time. There was a rule in the Civil Service, he understood, which made it impossible for men in the lower grades to rise to the higher grades of the service. This syllabus must be considered in view of the organisation of the staff. Let him remind the Committee what the organisation of the staff was at present. There were thirty-six assistant inspectors. They were appointed by a colleague of the right hon. Gentleman when a Liberal Government was in office. When appointed they had larger powers than they had now, and assurances were given that they would have opportunities of rising in the service. They were at first able to enter factories, but there had been a process going on during the past thirteen years which had closed the doors to the assistant inspectors. Now, if an assistant inspector went into a work place and discovered irregularities, all that had to be done was for the person responsible for the irregularities to show a gas engine in order to be able to tell the assistant inspector that he was in a factory and not a work shop. In such a case, the assistant inspector had no power whatever; he could only report the occurrence to the full inspector and the whole process of investigation had to go on again. Of the thirty-six assistant inspectors, twenty had reached the maximum salary and position. The maximum salary of an assistant inspector was £150 and the minimum salary of a junior full inspector £200. Every pressure had been brought to bear on the Home Office to allow these assistant inspectors who had reached the maximum to be promoted to positions where they would enjoy higher salary and more power, and, if he might say so, more honour in respect of the excellent work they had been doing since their appointment. It was a matter of common knowledge that one of these inspectors passed an examination a short time ago for the full inspectorship, but from that day he had never been called upon to fill a vacancy although several had occurred since. After that three gentlemen from the universities passed examinations for inspectorships, and two of the number were appointed to fill vacancies, and the third gentleman who was not appointed at the time had since without further examination received an appointment. That was how the workmen were treated on the one hand and how the middle class university men were treated on the other. Twenty men who had reached the maximum, who had been trained at the public expense, and who had made themselves efficient, were, according to the methods of the Home Office, kept from entering the higher positions, while new, untried, and unknown men were, upon mere classical and literary examinations, going to be placed in the higher positions. What could they expect their assistant inspectors to think if their merits were not recognised? The only way in which their merits were at present recognised was by handing over to them the newly appointed men to be initiated in the work which they themselves knew. Although the assistant inspectors passed examinations they were not encouraged to study and to acquire the general knowledge and culture which would qualify them for the higher positions. If it were necessary he thought he could also make out a similar case as regards the women. It must not be imagined that the appointment of women as factory inspectors was such a grand thing as some people thought. At the present time the right hon. Gentleman would discover by looking at the records of the Home Office that practical women with a knowledge of sanitary science and law, and of administration, had been applying for appointments for years, while untried clerks and private secretaries without practical experience had been appointed over their heads. He ventured to hope that the right hon. Gentleman would very seriously consider the down grade in factory inspection which was marked so conspicuously by the issue of this syllabus. He and his hon. friends of the Labour Party held that capital should not be unnecessarily harried by untried men of no experience, amateurs who had merely passed literary examinations; they held also that workmen should not be exposed to the dangers of their calling by the imperfect knowledge of inspectors. He still trusted that the right hon. Gentleman when he replied would be able to say that he could see his way to offer some of the vacancies which were impending in the factory inspection department to practical men and women who were fitted by their experience for the work, and thereby to fulfil the great hopes which had been raised as to what was going to happen now that his Party had come into office.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean) said the hon. Gentleman opposite, in his concluding words, spoke of the women inspectors employed by the Home Office, and the hon. Gentleman who moved the Amendment thanked the Home Secretary for increasing the inspectorate in the women's department. His impression of the reply given by the Home Secretary to a question a day or two ago was that the increase of a single inspector in the Estimate was not the increase which was now contemplated. He understood it was intended that a further increase should take place. On that question he had to thank the Home Secretary for the action he had in contemplation, and to express his agreement with the hon. Gentleman opposite in wishing that the new appointments should be kept, if possible, up to the high standard which had prevailed in the existing staff. No one who knew the facts could doubt the excellent service which had been rendered, and everyone who wished for the successful working of the department would hope that the future appointments would be up to the standard of the highest and best prevailing at present. To some extent he shared the apprehensions of previous speakers, but it was not for him to go into the details which they had so admirably stated in regard to the rules under the Employment of Children's Act. On the general principle he would say that the rules which had been so carefully thought out by the County Council should not be delayed for two years. His wish had always been to support the municipal and the local authorities in the work of their districts, and so far as the Home Office was consulted in regard to rules of this sort—and the Local Government Board in regard to similar rules—authority should be exerted with the view of co-ordinating the action of the local authorities rather than with the view of putting difficulties in their way. No one who knew the state of things prevailing in this country could doubt that the London County Council had the sympathy of the great cities in this matter. He joined his hon friends the mover and seconder of the Amendment in urging the Home Office to meet them as quickly as possible. The honour and the responsibility in regard to the rules depended virtually on the municipal body; they were the people who would be blamed if things went wrong; and they were the people who must know the facts better than any others could do. He thought, therefore, they ought to be trusted. The hon. Member for Berwickshire had referred to the work of the officers of the factory department and to the international conferences in which we had from time to time taken part. Last year on the Home Office Vote he himself made an attack on the then Government for having refused, on the advice of some of their officials, to take an effective part in first-rate international labour conferences. He pointed out at that time the reasons which made it overwhelmingly necessary for this country to be at the head of the movement and he showed how we were falling into the rear. He took this occasion again to point out to the House of Commons that it was not only the case that we had dropped out of the running in the international topics which he detailed last year, but to show that we had dropped out of the running with respect to subjects which were coming before the House this session. The Home Office had got behind in the advice they had received in a number of cases, and he could not help thinking that any weakness in the Department as regarded these practical questions would be most detrimental. They were going this session to discuss the whole amendment of the Workmen's Compensation Act in this country, and yet this was the only country which had taken no part in the international discussion of this subject at the Conferences in Dusseldorf in 1902 and in Vienna in 1905. All the difficulties arising here, and which would arise, had been dealt with most efficiently by the representatives of foreign Governments at these Conferences at which this country was unrepresented. When last year, by pressure in the House of Commons, they were successful in getting our Government represented on other classes of subjects, this country refused to sign the protocols. If there was any question bearing on legislation on which the Home Office must trust to the experienced advice of its Factory and Workshop Department, it was this one, and he was certain that that advice would be in the direction of taking part in international action. For example, all the other Powers were now going to make common their legislation in regard to compensation for accidents by means of treaties. At the present moment an alteration was pending in the system of recruiting the inspectorate of the Home Office. When his attention was called to it last winter it seemed to him impossible that such action should have been proposed to be taken. He had sent the syllabus issued by the Home Office to two of the highest authorities in this country on the practical working of factory inspection, and both condemned the new syllabus in the most positive terms. Under these circumstances he joined earnestly with his hon. friend who had spoken for his own personal knowledge, in the belief that this was a retrograde step in the recruitment of that Department, and he also joined with him in urging the Home Secretary to either withdraw or modify the syllabus.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. GLADSTONE, Leeds, W.) said that his hon. friend the Member for Berwickshire had referred to the bye-laws in regard to the employment of children with special reference to London, and complaint had been made by him and by the hon. Member for Leicester as to the long delay in bringing about some solution of the question. Of course he could not say what had passed during the last two years, but he thought, that though there had been numerous causes for the delay, it had been somewhat prolonged. When he came into office he found a report from Mr. Chester Jones, which had been sent to the London County Council for their observations, and he had waited for their reply. Personally, he had had no opportunity to lose any time, for he had no experience of the subject at that particular stage; but he hoped that the London County Council would send in their observations as soon as possible. His mind was perfectly unbiassed on the subject, but he had had such a pressure of other business that he had not been able to consider this particular matter. He also took note of the observations of the right hon. baronet the Member for the Forest of Dean in regard to the importance of co-ordinating whatever was done under this Act throughout the country. He passed from that to the remarks of the right hon. Gentleman in regard to the Berne Conference. He agreed that we were behind other nations in matters relating to labour. When he came into office he found that his predecessor had this matter in hand, and was about to make certain proposals when his term of office was cut short. He was now in a position to tell the Committee how matters stood at present. The Swiss Government had sent a formal communication to our Government, asking for a reply to their proposal. Our answer, which had now been sent, or at any rate was on its way, was to the effect that the British Government accepted the principle of these International Conferences and would be ready—subject, of course, to certain conditions which naturally they made on behalf of this country—to take part in them on matters relating to labour and general industrial concerns as between one nation and another, and, in fact, between all civilised nations. It appeared to him that nothing but good could result from such Conferences. He was not prepared to accept all that had been said as to the disastrous effects of the system of examinations for Home Office inspectors by the hon. Member for Leicester, although the hon. Gentleman had given a clear account of how they appeared to him to operate. They all desired to raise the standard of examination, and they all desired to get the best and most practical men appointed as inspectors. It was extremely difficult and skilled work, and everybody recognised that general abilities and good judgment, as well as the acquisition of practical skill in actual technical handicraft, were necessary. Of course, it was obvious that he was not concerned with all the preliminary steps out of which the new system was evolved. As a matter of fact, the consideration of the new system had been going on for the last fifteen months at the Home Office, and he had no doubt his right hon. friend would be able to give the views he held in support of the system for which the right hon. Gentleman was more responsible than he was. His right hon. friend shook his head, but when he came into office he found these proposals in print. Might he ask hon. Members whether, from the point of view of continuity in administration, it was desirable when a new Minister came into office for him to pull up by the roots the things which had been gone into with great care by his predecessor? Then he had to consider whether this system of examination had not distinct elements of good in it. His hon. friend the Member for Berwickshire spoke of the probationary period as something new. He said that for a great deal of the time during the period which these novices, who were to be appointed under the new system, were engaged, they were learning their business at the expense of the manufacturers and their employers. That was not quite a true description, and under the old system they had to be examined in subjects in which they had actually not had personal training. As his hon. friend said, they had acquired book learning for the purpose of the exercise of their calling, by a process of cramming, which did no harm in a good many cases, but perhaps in some did a great deal of harm. These novices under the old system also had been inducted into their duties by the senior factory inspectors.

*MR. J. R. MACDONALD (Leicester) asked whether he might assume that they would pass an examination on practical subjects?

*MR. GLADSTONE agreed that some of the criticisms passed upon the new syllabus had force in them, but he pointed out that the Secretary of State was responsible for giving the nominations for the examinations. If nominations were given to a man with no other qualification than that humorously described by the hon. Member for Leicester, it might be quite possible to pass to these positions, through this examination, men who had no special qualification. It became a question of how this system of examination was going to be worked. At any rate, he gave this assurance to the Committee that, so far as he was concerned, he had no desire to see changes in the position of the staff in the direction feared by his hon. friends who had spoken in the debate. So far as he was concerned he would do his utmost to see that no such changes came about and that the qualifications of the inspectors should be not only maintained at the present height, but, if possible, improved. In administering the Factory Department he would be particularly on his guard against the possible evils from the point of view of the hon. Member for Leicester, and he took note with some little reservation of the fact that the hon. Member preferred those who were outside rather than inside the University circle. He made that reservation, because there were new Universities as well as old Universities, and because there were university men among the inspectors who had done extremely well. He did not anticipate that at the worst, even if he were wrong, and the hon. Member for Leicester and his hon. friend below the gangway were right, any great danger would result, because if he found that the new system was not working well, it would be very easy to change it and to go back to the system which experience had tested.

MR. H. J. TENNANT inquired whether the system would be retained for two years.

*MR. GLADSTONE said that two years was rather a long time to bind oneself to, and he made no pretence of having gone into the whole of the reasons for carrying out this scheme. He would be glad to consider whether any change was necessary in the second examination, and also the hon. Member for Leicester's question about the period of time. The hon. Member for Leicester said he had heard that if the probationary inspectors were found to be quite unsatisfactory, then a further extension of the two years might be obtained.

*MR. J. R. MACDONALD said that was a very bad principle.

*MR. GLADSTONE said he agreed. He should think that if after two years the probationer was found to be unsatisfactory, there would not be reason for renewing the appointment. He would consider the question of the examination at the end of the period. With regard to these examinations, it had to be borne in mind that the point was how the probationary factory inspectors might be helped to qualify themselves. At any rate, they should be enabled to increase their practical knowledge in these subjects, and it would not be asserted that no knowledge of the mechanics of sound and safe working was required to pass the probationer from that stage to the stage of inspector of factories. Another point raised by the hon. Member for Leicester was the position of inspectors' assistants. He should like to say, in the first instance, that, owing to representations made by his right hon. friend opposite to the Treasury, that body had sanctioned an increased allowance of £25 a year to certain of the best of the assistants which, although it was a small amount, showed that steps were being taken to improve the condition of these men.

*MR. J. R. MACDONALD asked if that was an honorarium or an increase of salary.

*MR. GLADSTONE replied that it was an increase of salary. He recognised that the hon. Gentleman had put his finger upon a weak spot in the Act of Parliament. He would take particular notice of these cases. Some years ago he was closely associated with his right hon. friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer in looking into the case of these clerks, and he recognised that extremely few promotions had been made from the ranks of the assistants to those of the inspectors. He also agreed that the assistant inspectors were somewhat prejudiced at present by the new system of examination. Under these circumstances he agreed that, having regard to the work that the assistant inspectors had to do, the scale of pay in their case would be hardly sufficient to make them contented with their position. The fact was that, through no fault of their own, the factory inspectors' assistants had got into backwater. It was an extremely unsatisfactory position both for themselves and for the public service, as they had come to a position where it was impossible to advance, and that fact must tell unfavourably on the work of the men themselves. These were difficulties in the question which he just mentioned, but he saw no difficulty in dealing with the question of inspectors' assistants. It was obvious that the general standard of factory inspector at the Home Office had risen and was steadily rising, and under these circumstances it was hardly to be expected that the inspectors' assistants should be qualified to do the work of inspectors. It was no fault of their own that they were not qualified for what he might call the higher work of the Inspecting Department. It was impossible that this should not be the case.

They had not the thinking mind, the full scientific knowledge, the power to handle statistics, or the aptitude of appearing in court and fighting through a mass of details. All these things required knowledge and training, which were not available for the assistants. He saw, however, no reason why a change should not be made, and why the work given to the assistants should not be extended, and perhaps the privilege given to them of rising to a higher grade; in any case, the road ought to be kept open for their rising to the highest grade. They should not be debarred if they had the necessary qualifications. These were the general conclusions he had come to on the subject. He would not go into details; he wished to have time to think this matter out, because it must be considered not only in the light of the system advocated, but in the light of the factory legislation as a whole. He had indicated to the House the general views upon which he would be prepared to act, and he should, he hoped, act without undue delay.

MR. T. L. CORBETT (Down, N.) said he desired very earnestly to draw attention to an official paper issued in 1905 relating to factory inspection—the more earnestly because the Home Secretary had given a most unsympathetic reply to Questions addressed to him on the subject.

*MR. GLADSTONE: When?

MR. T. L. CORBETT: Ten days ago. The figures in that Report, which was issued by the right hon. Gentleman's own Department, were very striking. They showed that 82,652 women and girls were under the protection of the regulations of the Factory Act, whilst 144,132 were shut out from the protection for want of legislation, for the reason that a large proportion of these women and girls were working in laundries connected with religious institutions. He believed the chief objection to the inspection of such laundries came from those which were carried on under the auspices of the Roman Catholic Church in Ireland. In England he believed the Roman Catholic, Anglican, and other churches under which these laundries worked had no objection to the inspection of their laundries.

*THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member is now entering on a subject which in his opinion requires legislation; that he cannot do; he can deal only with matters of administration.

MR. T. L. CORBETT submitted that he was entitled to ask whether the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for the Home Department admitted, as his predecessor had admitted, that voluntary inspection had failed. He hoped that what he had said would draw the attention of the right hon. Gentleman to the pressing need of something being done with regard to this matter.

*MR. TREVELYAN (Yorkshire, W.R., Elland) said he desired to call attention to a subject upon which there had been a considerable feeling arising, namely, the administration of the Aliens Act by the Home Office. It was true that this Government and this Parliament were not responsible in any way for the passing of that Act, but that fact did not relieve them from the responsibility of its administration and making the Act as little onerous and as little discreditable to Englishmen as it was possible to be. For some time past there had been important communications in various newspapers which indicated that the Immigration Boards that had the administration of the Act had been conducting their inquiries, and had been arriving at their conclusions with an exhibition of considerable prejudice, if not actual illegality. The Act was administered by immigration officers who, in the first instance, inquired into the character and quality of the immigrant. There was an appeal from them to the Immigration Boards, but the question which interested the Committee was the composition of the Immigration Boards, which were Courts of Appeal, but which were outside the law, and from which there was no appeal. They were practically uncontrolled in the decisions at which they arrived. He wished to know whether the information in the Answer given by the Home Secretary with regard to a certain case brought to his attention this afternoon came from the Immigration Board, or whether his right hon. friend had any further information to substantiate the information he had given, as the allegation against these Immigration Boards was that they had been acting illegally. He desired to call attention to several cases in which the Immigration Boards had acted illegally. In one a Russian tailor who came to this country with £5 10s. in his pocket—the sum mentioned in the Act as being required to show that the immigrant could maintain himself—was ordered to be deported on the ground that there were already a sufficient number of tailors in England. In another case the immigrant desired to plead that he was a political refugee, but was not allowed to do so because he had not raised the plea before the immigration officer. He was not allowed to land. Was it true that men were being sent back to Russia at the present time who were either political or religious refugees? If that was so, as he understood it was, the Committee wanted to know why they were sent back. In many cases these people had the money necessary under the Act to maintain themselves, but even if they had not the £5 on which the Act insisted they ought not to have been rejected. The Act provided that any immigrant who proved that he was seeking admission to this country solely to avoid prosecution or punishment for offences of a political or religious character should be allowed to come in, however poor he might be. That clause was put into the Bill at the instance of Lord Hugh Cecil. It was the speech made by Lord Hugh Cecil which drove the Government of the day into incorporating that clause, and, if the law was now being stretched or broken in any way so as to keep these people out, the Government ought to see that that state of things was put an end to. He did not know whether use was being made by the Immigration Boards of the word "proves" in the Bill—whether those Boards were insisting that a man who said he was a political refugee should bring corroborative evidence to prove that he was so. Was it likely that he would be able to bring corroborative evidence? He would like to ask, first, whether the Government in issuing new regulations—as he hoped they would do, and as he thought was indicated in a speech by the Under-Secretary of the Home Department—would, considering the condition of Russia at the present time, put in a suggestion that where a man came from a district in which there had been massacres, such as there had been in hundreds of districts in Russia, the fact that he had come from such a district should be taken as a proof that he was flying from persecution, in view of the difficulty there was of any sort of corroboration. Secondly, he would ask the Government whether under the new regulations they could not make it perfectly clear that these courts were to be held as open courts, and that reports should be obtainable of proceedings in them. When they were on the Opposition side they strenuously objected to there being no kind of appeal. Most of them thought that decisions should be given by an English court of law. As this was not so, he would first ask that these courts should be open courts in future; and, secondly, whether the Government, if they found, after the careful inquiry which he hoped would be instituted, that the present members of these Boards had been stretching their powers to the utmost to keep out these immigrants, they would change the complexion of these boards which, he believed, were appointed entirely by the late Government, who believed in this kind of legislation. There was no reason to support that legislation more than was necessary. It was the one Bill passed last year just to give the late Government an excuse for remaining in office. So little did the country care about it that the one Member from the East End of London who had been returned in support of the Act was the hon. Member for Stepney. All the other Members in the district in which the Bill was going to win votes were swept away. There was no support for the Bill in the country; there was no support for its principles among the working-classes, and the Government would be perfectly justified in doing everything in their power to mitigate the severity of this first piece of Protectionist legislation. They should do all that was possible to admit victims of persecution and to show that this House, even if it did not at some subsequent period repeal this legislation, at any rate disapproved of it.

*Sir W. EVANS GORDON (Tower Hamlets, Stepney) said the hon. Gentleman who had just sat down had observed that he was the only representative left of those Members from the East End of London who supported the Aliens Act of last year. He would, however, like to remind the Committee that almost every, if not every, candidate in the East End who was successful was a supporter of the Bill, and before its Second Reading begged the then Opposition to support it. He desired to refer to the general opposition to the measure which at present existed. The facts were that a campaign had been organised ever since the Act came into force. He knew the source of that campaign, why it had been organised, and by whom. It was organised in order to prejudice the public in every possible way against the working of the Act. Cases had been cited in the newspapers and particulars given of alleged hardship upon certain immigrants. In one breath it was said that the Press had no means of ascertaining the facts regarding these particular cases which came before the Immigration Board, because the Press was not allowed to attend the Court; and in the next breath, they came forward with cases purporting to represent the real facts. He would ask the Committee how it was possible, if the Press were not admitted to hear these cases, that really truthful particulars could be given to the Press. From whom were those particulars received? They were received presumably from the very persons who alleged themselves to be aggrieved, and they were coloured to taste in order to excite prejudice in the eyes of the public. There had been a remarkable instance of that given to the House to-day. The Home Secretary, in reply to a question, had told the House of a fact of which he was already cognisant, namely, that a letter had been found upon one of the men who were alleged to have been harshly treated, in which the man in question was told that the only chance he had of getting into this country was to say that he had been persecuted, and it gave him the particular details of the story which he was to put before the Immigration Board. That story was that he was supposed to have been kept in a cellar for three days on bread and water, and that he had seen his brother murdered before his eyes. That was the sort of thing the boards had to contend with; they had to judge from these people's pleas as to whether they had been persecuted or not. Jewish representatives of great weight and position, such as Mr. Leonard Cohen, had places on these boards, and so far as his information went they had in numerous instances discovered that these pleas of persecution rested upon no foundation whatever. In those cases, no doubt, the boards had rejected the appeal. But not one word had been said in the Press or by the hon. Gentleman who had just sat down of the manner in which the Act was being administered in the way of leniency and fairness. He had made some inquiries on the subject and he had been told by a member of the Immigration Board in London—one who was a Jew and in no way in favour of him personally or of the Act—that nothing could exceed the fairness, the impartiality, and the leniency with which it was being administered, and he had spoken in the highest terms of praise of the manner in which the gentlemen sitting on these boards were at present performing their duty. He himself had not the least doubt in his mind that large numbers of people were admitted into this country at the present time who, if the Act were stringently administered, would certainly be excluded under its provisions. He for one welcomed any detailed discussion of the individual cases of alleged persecution or hardship which appeared in the newspapers. He would be the last to wish that any genuine case of persecution should be excluded from this country, but he did beg the Committee to show that spirit of fairplay which he was sure every member desired, and not to accept *ex parte* statements which were appearing from day to day in the Press, and which, on the evidence itself, must be *ex parte*, because the Press themselves admitted they were not present at the trials, and could not, therefore, accurately state what actually occurred on the Boards. He felt certain that the Secretary of State for the Home Department would be able to give a satisfactory explanation of almost every one, if not every one, of these individual cases that were brought forward. He did so to-day in his reply. There was the case of Alexander Onix, which had aroused a good deal of notice in the Press; but when it came to be inquired into it was found to rest upon a very slender foundation. The individual was alleged to have been a persecuted man from Russia, but it transpired that his real residence was in Copenhagen. [Cries of "No."] He understood the right hon. Gentleman to say so.

*MR. GLADSTONE: He was shipped from Copenhagen.

*SIR W. EVANS GORDON said that no doubt that case to a very large extent broke down when it was inquired into. He mentioned the fact that these cases were raised in this House. His belief—and it was confirmed by members of the Jewish persuasion who were especially interested in this matter, and were absolutely impartial—was that the Act was being administered in a manner erring, if anything, on the side of leniency rather than on the side of severity. Hon. Members to whom this matter was perhaps somewhat new would do well to recollect that there were thousands of ne'er-do-wells moving about the Continent of Europe who had no prospect of doing any good in any country, and whom he had seen brought before charitable boards and institutions on the Continent at Hamburg and elsewhere, who would plead anything to get into this country, and who, in his humble judgment, it was most necessary to keep out. Those people were adepts at spinning harrowing tales as to the sufferings they had undergone, and he could assure hon. Members that many of those cases when impartially inquired into broke down. He was aware that the Secretary of State for the Home Department and the Under-Secretary were in this matter in a most difficult position, as they were both determined opponents of the Bill last session. They had now to administer the Act, and he felt certain that both the right hon. Gentleman and his colleagues would administer it perfectly fairly and justly. He hoped and believed that they would not allow any feeling they might hitherto have had to interfere with its just and fair administration. He believed that all the officers of Customs and other Departments involved had carried out their duties in an admirable manner. The fact that an Act in many respects so new and complicated as this, which had given rise to an extraordinary amount of criticism, had worked very smoothly was a credit to the Department which had had it in hand. Those were the views he had heard from people who were perfectly impartial, such as shipowners and others who might be expected to complain if complaint were necessary. He begged the Committee to pause long and consider well before they accepted the sensational statements which were being made from day to day in the newspapers, and, before they came to a decision upon any individual case, to hear the full particulars, and to hear what the Department concerned had to say. He did not propose to follow the hon. Gentleman who had just sat down into the details of general policy. It would, indeed, be out of order at that moment, because the whole policy might come up again for discussion. With regard to the regulations, he hoped that the Committee would remember that the Act had been in force for only about two months, and it was, therefore, early to express any very definite views upon the manner in which it had operated.

*MR. LEIF JONES (Westmoreland, Appleby) said that no one in the House last session would dispute the sincerity of the support which the hon. Member opposite had given to the Aliens Act, and he was to-day the consistent champion of a lost cause. He had spoken of a campaign to mislead the public in connection with this Act. He knew nothing about any campaign of that sort, and he wished to associate himself with the protest made by the hon. Member for the Elland Division against some of the fruits of the Aliens Act. There was a campaign last year of which the hon. Member opposite might know something, and without such a campaign he did not think the Aliens Act would have disfigured the Statute Book of this country. An appeal had been made to them to hear both sides. That was what they were doing, and it was only to-day that the other side of the case was being put. They objected to the carrying out of this Act, on the ground that it would tend to the exclusion of political refugees and immigrants coming to this country for the sake of poverty, and the working of the Act which they were entitled to review had justified the fears which were expressed when the Act was under discussion. The operation of the Act had been capricious. If aliens came in in less number than twelve, they were not interfered with, but if there were more than twelve, then they had to answer searching nterrogatories, and pass the Immigratiion Officer and his Board. He did not know whether it was part of the intention of the little Englanders who supported this Bill to prevent the issue of third-class return tickets to the Continent. The Belgian State Railway had discontinued the issue of such tickets. The English railways had since done the same, and when it was realised that 50 per cent. of the holiday traffic to the Continent consisted of third-class passengers, it would be seen what a blow was being struck at the shipping industry. This was very much of the same character as the injury which would be inflicted upon the shipping interest by some other of those proposals of which they had heard so much.

*THE CHAIRMAN: Order, order! The hon. Member is now criticising the Act, and he can only deal with the administration of the Act of the present time.

*MR. LEIF JONES said that under its operation the Act was excluding refugees who ought to be allowed to find a refuge in this country.

*THE CHAIRMAN: I am afraid the hon. Member is disregarding my ruling. He must deal with the administration of the Act and nothing else.

*MR. LEIF JONES said the Act was so administered by the Boards of Immigration and their officers that they were shutting out refugees who under the Act were entitled to enter. Those refugees were helpless and ignorant people, and when they came before these Immigration Boards and were subjected to the difficult rules set up, they lost the opportunity which they might have under the Act of justifying their positions and procuring an entrance. It was upon that point that he wished to appeal to the Home Secretary. He would quote three cases. One of them was a refugee from Warsaw, who went out on strike, and was ordered back again to work, but he made his escape from Russia, and he was not allowed to land by the immigration officer in this country. He thought it would be the intention of everyone in this House that a striker should come under the definition of a political refugee. Another case was that of a soldier who refused to fire upon the strikers, and having fled from his country, where he was in danger of his life, he was not allowed to enter, and had to go back to his own country or seek another refuge. Then there was the case of a woman who arrived in England with two young children. She had fled from Odessa after being robbed during the massacre. It was found that she had £9 in her possession, but she was rejected on the ground that she was suffering from weakness. If an immigrant came from a foreign country fleeing from massacre, and she arrived here after a troublesome crossing, it was not at all extraordinary that she should be suffering from weakness. To him that would seem rather more of a reason for helping instead of rejecting her. He thought that even the hon. Member opposite would agree that it was never intended that this Act should be used for the exclusion of such cases, and therefore he associated himself with the feeling which had been expressed that greater care should be taken by the Immigration Board to prevent a recurrence of these cases. He was glad to read the speech delivered by the Home Secretary on Saturday night, for in it he recognised the absurdities and hardships of this Act. The right hon. Gentleman admitted that in one case an action had been done unworthy of the British nation, but he went on to say that the Immigration Boards were sovereign courts whose decisions were final. Was it really true that these Immigrations Boards were sovereign courts? Was it not true that they were under the direction of the right hon. Gentleman, and that they administered the law along the line which he laid down? At any rate, the right hon. Gentleman possessed the power of the purse, and he could by limiting the expenditure limit its evil operations. It was no light matter that they were raising, and they were acting with a full sense of responsibility, because they knew that the honour of this country was at stake. It was unworthy of the reputation of a humane and free people, and it did violence to the strong and hereditary sympathy of the people of this country in regard to the poor and oppressed of every land.

*MR. STUART SAMUEL (Tower Hamlets, Whitechapel) said that as a member of the Jewish community, to which a large number of these refugees belonged, he wished to state that the administration of the Aliens Act had given them the utmost dissatisfaction, and had excited the unanimous condemnation of the Jewish Press. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman in the new regulations which he proposed to issue would make the Act clear to those poor people who came from foreign countries with no knowledge of the English language and who were unacquainted with the provisions of the Act. The fact that so many appeals had been allowed tended to showed that the Immigration Officers themselves did not well understand the regulations under the Act. The right hon. Gentleman had said that during the month of January out of 202 cases 102 had not been allowed to land, whilst 100 had been allowed to land. He wished to point out that when the Act was passed the intention of Parliament was that this country should be open to the victims of religious and political persecution abroad, quite independently of their state of health and the amount of money they had in their pockets. The people of this country were not prepared to see foreigners persecuted because they were in ill-health. Under the present system of administration an immigrant might not be persecuted if he had £5, but a person who had only £4 10s. might be. That was the logical deduction from the way in which the rules were administered at the present moment. He might mention a case within his own knowledge of three women—mother, daughter (of the name of Stolkiner), and granddaughter—who came from Russia, where the younger of the three had been arrested for distributing pamphlets among the soldiers. Her father had been shot during the recent disturbances in Russia, and she came with her mother and grandmother to this country, but they were refused admission because they were not in a state of good health. He maintained that that was absolutely illegal. If a girl whose father had been shot was not the victim of political persecution and in danger of life and limb, he would like to know who was. He wished to know what were the conditions under which they were to be allowed to come into this country. When the Act was passed the intention of the House and of the country generally was that this country should be a haven of refuge for those who were persecuted. The immigration officers had in hundreds of cases been unable properly to understand the regulations which had been issued. They were little to blame for finding it difficult to understand the rules. He did not at present propose to go into the question of the appointment which had been given to the private secretary of the hon. and gallant Member for Stepney. He would review that matter later on, when the Estimates came up for discussion. The hon. and gallant Member alluded to a one-sided view of this question, but if the appointment of a gentleman who was certain to have a bias had been made from the Liberal side of the House he thought it would have been universally condemned. A further reason why it was desirable that the appeals should be diminished was that the cost of administration depended on the number of appeals. The members of the Immigration Board were paid a fee for each attendance, and therefore the greater the fees the greater the cost. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for the St. Augustine's Division, when Home Secretary, stated that the cost to the poor rates for the maintenance of aliens in 1904 was £28,000. He should look with interest to the cost of administering the Aliens Act. It seemed to him that it would be very poor finance to expend £40,000 in order to avoid an expenditure of £28,000. His own belief was that the Aliens Act would cost a large sum to administer, and that they would still have to expend the £28,000. It would be quite impossible to have any aliens on the rates, so far as the Jewish community was concerned, because they undertook the maintenance of their own poor.

MR. MADDISON (Burnley) said he desired to associate himself with the protest made against the administration of the Aliens Act. He was quite aware that they could not discuss the Act itself to-day, but he thought that the Home Secretary could not do better than always bear in mind that the Aliens Act was one of the most fraudulent pieces of legislation which even the late Government produced. When he remembered that, he also ought to remember that the only way to use that Act anything like decently was to administer it on Liberal principles. Under such administration the benefit of the doubt would on every occasion be given to the immigrant and not to the Immigration Board. The difference between working the Act in the way he suggested and working it otherwise would show itself very distinctly in administration. He asked the Home Secretary to inquire into every one of the cases of alleged mal-administration which had been brought forward and to be very vigilant to detect such cases. He had heard of a case of a family—he thought they were Russian—who were all admitted with the exception of a girl, nine years of age, who was dumb. He did not believe that the girl was legally excluded. When a body of officials was appointed those officials needed watching by this House and by the country at large. Every State official might become a serious danger to the community, and if that State official had to administer an Act which dealt with individual liberty a mistake on his part might damage the reputation of our country. Hence it was necessary to watch him very carefully indeed. He wished to know whether the Home Secretary had power to add to or to alter the constitution of Immigration Boards in any way. He understood that working men were to be put on the panels from which the Boards were selected. If the ex-Home Secretary put any working men on those panels they had not got on to the Immigration Boards yet. He hoped that the present Home Secretary would do something in this direction. It had been proved sufficiently that under the administration of the Act men who were undoubtedly political refugees had been sent back. It was reasonable to ask that when a man could prove that he came from a country which was in a state of revolution, as Russia was, that man should be admitted at once, although he had not a cent in his pocket. He and his friends raised this matter under a sense of responsibility, and at the earliest possible moment they would endeavour to eliminate from the Act everything which was against the honour, not only of this country but of humanity, so that no one would be kept out unless he was suffering from infectious disease, or was a criminal.

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member is talking now about future legislation, and that is not in order.

MR. MADDISON said he was only expressing regret that he could not pursue the subject. He would again ask the Home Secretary to administer the Act in the interests of the political refugee, and not in the interests of that narrow exclusivism which was brought forward for electioneering purposes and which had done so much to defame the honour of our country.

MR. G. A. HARDY (Suffolk, Stowmarket) said he saw from the Estimate that a sum of £11,000 was put down as a charge for salaries in regard to the Aliens Act. There also appeared an item of £1,000 saved in contributions given to the inebriate homes of this country. He wished to ask the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary if he would take into serious consideration what that reduction meant. Some few years ago it was definitely promised by the Government, when the inebriate homes were started, that 10s. 6d. would be granted for each inmate. Now they found such contributions reduced to 7s. 6d. The result of that would be that, so far as the county councils were concerned, they would have to take into serious consideration the question whether or not they would continue the homes. This change would affect various inebriate homes in every part of the country. He sincerely trusted that the Home Secretary would consider the matter, so that the poor drunken women of this country might have a chance of reformation.

SIR HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central) said their concern and responsibility in regard to the administration of the Act should be in regard to the people of our own country rather than to foreigners. He thought the greatest credit and gratitude were due to the right hon. Gentleman the late Home Secretary for the admirable way in which the rules had been drawn. He earnestly hoped that the present Home Secretary would allow a decent interval to elapse for the new rules to be thoroughly tried before interfering with them in any way. The hon. Member the Under-Secretary for the Home Department had made a speech in which he stated that an early change was contemplated. He hoped the regulations would not be changed until they had been properly and thoroughly tried. He would remind the Committee that Acts of this character had been in force in America for many years. The people of the United States were quite as alive as we were to the sentiments of generosity, charity and hospitality; but there was not the smallest feeling in that country as regarded any hardship. On the contrary, within the last few weeks a Conference had taken place in New York or some other important city, and the conclusion arrived at was that these Acts should be rather strengthened than weakened.

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. Gentleman must discuss the administration of the Act in this country.

SIR HOWARD VINCENT said that he did not want to discuss the Acts or the policy of the Acts in America, but the regulations under the Act of last session in this country. What he wanted to ask the Home Secretary was to allow a decent trial of the rules introduced by the right hon. Gentleman's predecessor before attempting to interfere with them. He hoped the Home Secretary would inform the Committee how many lunatics and people of that character or suffering from incurable diseases were being supported by the taxpayers and ratepayers of this country and who had been admitted, unfortunately, into charitable institutions here? The case of a crippled child had been mentioned by the hon. Member for Burnley. Nobody would show any hardship to a cripple or any person suffering from an incurable disease; but he did maintain that it was not the business of this country to receive such persons and let them be a burden on the ratepayers and taxpayers. It was the interest of the working people of this country that this Act and the regulations which had been drafted by his right hon. friend the late Home Secretary should be put in force, and that the present Home Secretary should endeavour to administer the Act as passed by the House of Commons.

*MR. J. R. MACDONALD said that the hon. Gentleman who had just sat down had appealed to the Home Secretary to give to the new rules a longer trial; but, as a matter of fact, the two months' trial had been quite sufficient to demonstrate their most objectionable character. He had a list of forty cases which, on the face of them, seemed to be serious breaches of the honourable historical traditions of this country—traditions recognised from one end of the earth to the other, that all persecuted people might find refuge here. He hoped the Home Secretary would not allow such a state of things to last if he could possibly help it. The hon. Member for Central Sheffield talked about the working classes desiring that these regulations should be enforced, but he would like to remind that hon. Gentleman how the working classes the other day signified what their intentions were. Of course it was altogether impossible for the working classes to be absolutely unanimous on this or any other subject. But he could assure the hon. Gentleman that the working classes were prepared to maintain the incurables to which the hon. Gentleman had referred, even at their own expense, rather than close the doors of this country to refugees. The hon. and gallant Member for Stepney, who happened to be in a very happy-go-lucky frame of mind, had discovered that a certain number of ne'er-do-weels were desirous of finding asylum in this country. Undoubtedly some ne'er-do-weels did want to come here. Nobody wanted them; but in the administration of the Act no attempt had been made to discriminate between them and the cases to which attention had been drawn this afternoon. There should be some machinery established by which the Home Office would be enabled to separate the genuine political refugee from the impostor and the ne'er-do-weel. Now Alexander Onix, whose case had been referred to, was a genuine political refugee. He came from Russia to Harwich, viâ Copenhagen, because he had left the Russian Army. His coming was known by political organisations in this country. A statement was made by one Wahl, a civilian comrade, who escaped from Reval with Onix, and this was what Wahl said—

> "The inspector came on board with an interpreter, but the latter spoke only German. Onix knows only his native Esthonian (i.e. Finnish) and some little Russian. Wahl did all the talking for the party of three. The conversation ran like this :—Interpreter : Have you got your passports or papers of identification? Wahl : No, Sir. We have no papers. We are refugees who have just escaped from Russia. Interpreter : Have each of you got £5 in his possession? Wahl : Two of us have, but this man, Onix, has not. He fled in a hurry. But we understand that refugees may come in without money. Interpreter : No, you must each have £5. Wahl then offered to go to London, procure money for Onix, and telegraph it ; and the interpreter at first thought this would be accepted. There was some further talk in English, which Wahl could not understand. Then Wahl said : I can easily send £10. Interpeter (translating for inspector) : It's no good, even if you send £20. Interpreter : How long are you going to stay in England? Wahl : Three or four days. We're going to America, and we have to wait for money from Russia. (£15 has since come for Onix to my address.) There was further talk in English, the shipping agent intervening. Then the interpreter told Wahl that if his friend in London would guarantee that Onix was going to America, he would be allowed to enter. He gave him a telegraphic address and said that a telegram before 8 p.m. would be in time. I telegraphed at 6.30, but before my telegram reached Harwich Onix had been deported."

Now that was a simple statement, and, if the Home Secretary inquired, it would be found that it was perfectly genuine ; and that it was a type of certain other cases of a similar character. He and his friends wanted to know the reason for these deportations. Was it because the men were tailors or carpenters or members of trades which were already overstocked in this country? Then, he would ask the Home Secretary to consider whether the Immigration Boards could meet in public and not have secret sittings? Another suggestion was that in the future administration of the Act, not only workmen, but the representatives of certain well-known political organisations—such as the "Friends of Russian Freedom," which had done such excellent work—should have a seat on these Boards. The whole point was that genuine political refugees should be allowed to enter this country, whether they had each £5 or only a cent., and whether they were tailors or carpenters or ministers or would-be M.P.'s. The Immigration Boards should be efficient and men should be upon them who understood what were political refugees, where they came from, and whether their cases was genuine or not. He had been glad to hear from the right hon. Gentleman that there would be better regulations and better administration of them, although he knew that the right hon. Gentleman's hands were tied to a considerable degree. There was another point which the Labour Party desired to bring before the right hon. Gentleman. The Act stated that a political or religious refugee must prove that he was such. Would the right hon. Gentleman consider what was the nature of the proof required to show that an immigrant was a political or religious refugee? And would the right hon. Gentleman frame new regulations making that point clear and simple? The representatives of the working classes in the House were genuinely anxious for the successful administration of the Act, but they were very jealous of the best traditions of this country. The Labour Party looked back with pride upon the magnificent stand which this country had made for the right of asylum for fugitive and persecuted persons and did not desire those privileges to be curtailed.

*SIR CHARLE DILKE said the hon. Member had taken a view of the words of the Act which was entirely confirmed by the debates which took place upon them when it was before the House as a Bill. It was the view which was taken of them by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the St. Augustine's Division of Kent when the Bill was before the House, and, although the right hon. Gentleman and he differed *in toto* as to the wisdom of the measure they were at all events throughout the discussions agreed upon that point. The right hon. Gentleman did not resist the Amendments brought forward on this point, but expressed his desire to give them what they asked for, and even his own friends and supporters complained of his going so far in what he had done. The concessions made were sufficient for Lord Hugh Cecil, who raised the very point which had been debated that afternoon. The noble Lord asked if he was to be told that because an individual, who had been in danger of massacre, had not a certain property standard, he was to be sent back to his native country. That was the whole point of the debate, and the promises which were made turned upon these very words which had been debated this afternoon. The Prime Minister attached no importance to the word "proves" and tried to improve Lord Hugh Cecil's substantive proposal, the noble Lord having raised the same point which they raised to-day. The Prime Minister thought he had met that point and Lord Hugh Cecil, who had protested on behalf of those who claimed the right of religious and political asylum, was satisfied with the words which the right hon. Gentleman proposed. The Opposition of the day however, raised some difficulty, as they were not satisfied and thought they had not been fully met, as they wanted the addition of the word "liberty," which was suggested by the Chancellor of the Exchequer. Although the Government divided against the word Lord Hugh Cecil was satisfied, but hon. Members never conceived for a moment that this point would arise in connection with the working of the Act. On the contrary, hon. Gentlemen on the Opposition side thought that the Prime Minister had gone too far. Besides the question of political or religious refugees, there was another important matter. They fought the Act of last year, and the worse Bill of the year before, on the question of political and religious refugees, and they thought they had been more successful than they had been, if the Act was to be worked in this way. But there was another important matter, and that was that they had also fought this matter on the ground of its interference with immigrant and transChannel traffic, and therefore of its interference with the business arrangements of this country and the Continent. Was the Bill of last year worse than they supposed, or had it been made worse by the regulations or the administration of them? He confessed that it seemed to him that both the regulations and the administration of them had been unduly harsh, to a degree which was never contemplated by the opponents of the measure. The regulations or the administration of them must have been worse than the House of Commons contemplated. He was speaking in the presence of one who had had personal experience of the working of this Act. In the regrettable absence of Mr. Bowles from that House they could understand what he would say if he was stopped and asked if he had £5 and was an Englishman. He could imagine the kind of answer he would give in France. Another man he should not like to stop and ask would be the hon. Member for Accrington. The newspapers of America, when President Roosevelt's motor-car was run into by a trolley, had paragraphs of "What President Roosevelt said to the trolley man." It was nothing, as they would all understand, to what the hon. Member for Accrington would say to the Frenchman who asked him if he was an Englishman. Was it the case that Belgium and France had protested against the working of the Act, as it interfered with ordinary conditions to such a degree that it had produced consequences which nobody expected last year when it was passed? Mistaken as they might have been in passing it, he could not but say that the regulations which were drawn up were worse than the Act itself, and the working of the regulations was worse than the regulations themselves. They ought to have intelligible regulations issued and worked in the spirit in which the House would desire to see them worked.

*Sir JOSEPH LEESE (Lancashire, Accrington) said, after his right hon. friend's challenge it was impossible for him to remain silent, though he was not sure that he had not over-described the picture which he could draw. At any rate, he might be allowed to say this, that in his view, not only was this Act of Parliament degrading to the country but it was degrading also to the individual Englishman. He was coming home from the Continent a few days ago, and on reaching the gangway of the cross channel steamboat he was confronted and addressed by a small gentleman in French uniform, who asked him in broken English "Are you an Englishman?" He was a good deal surprised but replied as politely as he could, "What is that to you?" For an Englishman returning to his own country to be cross-examined by a foreigner as to his nationality was certainly a new and degrading experience.

SIR HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central): I was asked that question and did not think it insulting.

*SIR JOSEPH LEESE said, that after he had passed up the gangway, a gentleman on board the ship came to him, and said, "Are you a British subject?" He replied, "Mind your own business." Why should an Englishman going to his own country be insulted? He did not think he looked like an undesirable alien, and he had certainly a respectable ticket in his pocket. So this Act of Parliament, badly administered as it had been in this country, extended insults to the people of this country. When he got on board he said to the steward, "Is there a Frenchman at Folkestone to ask a man going to France whether he is a French citizen?" He said, "No, sir, there is no such Act in France."

COLONEL LOCKWOOD rose to call attention to the salaries under the Vivisection of Animals Act.

MR. CREMER (Shoreditch, Haggerston) rose to a point of order. If the hon. and gallant Gentleman asked his Question, would the Committee be precluded from further discussion of the question upon which they were engaged?

THE CHAIRMAN: The Committee will not be precluded from further discussion of the topic, but I understand that the Secretary of State for the Home Department wishes to reply now, and if that is so, I will call upon the right hon. Gentleman.

*MR. GLADSTONE said in the first instance he would like to reply to the hon. Member for North Down who had asked him a Question about the inspection of laundries. The hon. Member said that at Question time he had given him a very unsympathetic Answer to the inquiry whether this Government would deal with the subject. He had told the hon. Member that they could not be expected to deal with the subject this session, and he would point out that the hon. Gentleman's own Party was in office for ten years and had left the question unsettled. It hardly lay with the hon. Member, therefore, to taunt him with giving such an Answer in the first session of this Government.

MR. T. L. CORBETT: The ex-Home Secretary promised that he would introduce a Bill during the present session.

*MR. GLADSTONE said that the Question ought to have been addressed to a Member of the Front Opposition Bench and not to him. In regard to the question as to Inebriate Homes he would gladly look into it, but it was hardly possible to do it now, though he hoped it would be brought forward at another opportunity. Hon. Gentlemen opposite, who for ten years had been clamouring for an Aliens Bill, put off the passing of the Bill to the last month or two of the last session of their political existence, though he saw no reason from the point of view of hon. Gentlemen opposite why the Act should not have been passed years ago. But he confessed that since it had fallen to him to administer the Act he felt no surprise at the long delay in bringing the Bill forward. He could, indeed, quite understand the wish to pass it and to take the credit of it at the general election, and then to leave to their political opponents the difficulty, and possibly the odium, of working it. His position, and the position of those who acted with him, was perfectly well known with regard to the Act. He was not going to discuss the Act. They had disagreed with the main portion of it, agreeing with it only so far as it dealt with diseased people and criminals. They had considered that the subject was full of difficulties, that it would cause more trouble than it was worth, and that there was not much chance of any Bill being worked effectively—in short, that there were many reasons against the proposals and hardly any in favour of them. What had been their experience? A good deal had been said in the debate about the Act, and he observed that it had not found many champions on the opposite Benches. Two hon. Gentlemen only who were protagonists and supporters of the Bill had spoken for it up to the present time, while other speakers had denounced it in no measured terms. He now occupied the unhappy position of knowing that whatever he did or said on the subject of the administration of the Act would draw fire upon him from all quarters of the House. He was inclined to demur to the statement that the regulations were not clear. He did not draw up the regulations, but he would undertake to say that very great care and pains were taken in the Home Office to make them as effective as possible. If they failed he doubted whether it was the fault of the framers of the regulations; the real cause of the difficulty of devising regulations dealing with this matter which would work smoothly in all quarters ought probably to be sought in the Act itself. In fairness to the officials who were endeavouring to work the Act at the various immigration ports, it should be allowed that the nature of the work which they had to perform exposed them to all sorts of difficulties. Certain people interested in passing immigrants into this country were putting the would-be immigrants up to various ways of evading the Act, and the immigration officials had to look very closely into individual cases. Difficulties arose owing to the language question. Immigrants came here, perhaps after dark, in bad weather, and the interpreter could not speak their particular language and, however carefully one tried to go into the details afterwards, it was almost impossible to ascertain what really had happened. In the case of Onix, the immigration officer did his duty as far as he was able, but it was also pretty clear that the intention of the third section was not carried out. He believed Onix did come under the designation of a political refugee, and ought to have been admitted. He did not blame the immigration officer. That particular difficulty arose because very few Russians arrived at the port in question, and it was impossible to keep an interpreter at every port for every language. With a view to meeting this difficulty printed notices would be delivered to immigrants who, *viva voce*, could not be made to understand the interpreter. The Act had led to cases, sommetimes painful, sometimes ludicrous, sometimes exceedingly difficult. For instance, there was the case of thirteen Scandinavian sailors who arrived at a port which was not an immigration port and at which they were not allowed to land. They came to join their ships, and close by were the ships they had come to join. Inquiry was made as to what was to be done. If they had not been allowed to land the only course open to them would have been to return to the port from which they had come, then to have gone by sea to one of the Tyne ports, and finally reached their destination by train. He would not say whether the law was in any way broken in that case. Whether these men were allowed to land, or whether they joined their ships without landing he did not know; perhaps they did. It was not an immigration port, and over those ports the Secretary of State had no power. Then as to the American shipwrecked crew, he did not anticipate much difficulty in similar cases, as it had been arranged that the consular official concerned should be at once notified and leave given to the sailors to land. In the case of the French onion sellers, they were a deserving class of men who had not come to compete in any British industry, but, on the contrary, to sell an article of food to the poorer classes of this country; they were well behaved and came and went without trouble to anybody. About seventeen arrived and were told they could not land owing to this Act. When that incident occurred he had been extremely anxious not to give unnecessary trouble to our neighbours, and the Consuls had been instructed to make known the provisions of the Act to these men, so that they might take advantage of the many loopholes —he would not call them loopholes, as it was perhaps an invidious term —the many opportunities which he

Act allowed to these and other cases so that people might take their own measures to come into this country without in any way being inconvenienced. Then there was the case of the deaf and dumb man who, suspected of being a criminal alien, was brought before the magistrate, but as he was both deaf and dumb it was impossible to prove that he was either a criminal or an alien, and, as no one could discover his country or origin, there was nothing to be done but to discharge him. One painful case which had occurred was that of an idiot girl of nine years old who was rejected and sent back alone. [AN HON. MEMBER: So she ought to have been.] He disagreed with the hon. Member. The Act ought to be made so elastic that full discrimination might be exercised in these cases and the fame of this country for generous treatment of these and other cases maintained. In that case the girl came back to this country a day or two afterwards as a first class passenger—[AN HON. MEMBER: The same as the criminals]—and was in this country now. A good deal of inventiveness was being exercised in regard to these cases, but any case brought to his knowledge in which an immigration officer or board was charged with doing anything improper would be carefully inquired into as far as possible. Already there had been several cases referred to which on the face of them were of great hardship, but he was bound to say that in many instances there had been up to the present no corroboration, though the persons might be genuine refugees. He wished to remind hon. Members that his powers were extremely limited under the Act. For example, hon. Members had dealt with the word "proves" in Section 3. The onus of proof under that section was entirely on the immigrant. He had been asked whether it would not be possible to sift the men applying on religious or political grounds or because of persecution from those who were not. That really rested entirely with the Immigration Boards. If the Secretary of State were asked whether or no a particular act constituted an offence of a political character he could give his opinion, but the Immigration Board was the sovereign authority so far as its own acts were concerned. It was quite true that in the appointment of a board the Secretary of State for the Home Department might have a good deal to say, and it was quite possible that he had the power of getting rid of a board and appointing a new one; but so far as the actions of the board under the Act were concerned, the Secretary of State had no authority to interfere at all. He had been asked whether there had not been illegal actions by the Immigration Boards. He was quite sure that the Immigration Boards were trying to do their duty as well as they possibly could. They were men of character and intelligence who understood the Act, and were acting in accordance with its provisions; but even if they acted with the utmost strictness within their powers, that did not prevent extremely hard cases arising. From the very nature of the case they must arise whatever regulations were made. The hon. Member for Burnley had asked whether it would not be possible to add a representative of the working classes to the boards. As he had already said, the number on the Immigration Board was limited to three, but he understood that there were workmen's representatives among those from whom the boards were chosen. He would make, however, further inquiry into the question, and if he were satisfied that anything could be done to improve the administration of the Act in that respect he would try to carry it into effect. He recognised that a serious responsibility rested upon himself in regard to this Act. To start the administration of an Act, to the greater part of which one was opposed in Parliament, was no easy matter. And, having regard to the fact that a great deal of the opposition to the Act was based on the belief that it would be very difficult to administer, to prevent its provisions being evaded, and to prevent them in some respects being made ridiculous, it was a matter of some concern to him that he should not lay himself open to the charge of justifying previous opinions by allowing matters to happen which the strict administration of the Act would not allow. That was the position. For his own part he had to recognise that the Act was the law of the land, and he should endeavour to get as much good as he could out of it. So far as the criminal side of the Act was concerned he thought there was reason for satisfaction. Up to the present he did not know of any serious difficulty that had arisen. They had already rid the country of notorious pests, and he did not anticipate that there would be much difficulty or much difference of opinion with regard to that side of the question. He should endeavour, so far as he could, honestly to do justice to the Act, and above all to support officers who were conscientiously doing their best in the interests of the Act. On the other hand, he recognised the proud position this country had occupied for a great number of years in opening her gates to the distressed people of the world. He should endeavour to further the Act as far as possible according to the intention expressed by Parliament when the particular provisions to which he had alluded were put in the third section of the Act. He would carefully consider any suggestions which might be made. He was collecting information from the Immigration Boards, but it was too early to present any information worth basing any serious argument upon. He would consider in what way he could avoid the painful cases which had occurred and which were likely to occur under such regulations. He had already stated that there were one or two ways in which he thought he could produce improvements in the working of the Act—first, by publishing at the immigration ports notices in every language likely to be used by immigrants; and, secondly, in regard to the sittings of the boards *in camera.* He thought these were disadvantages accruing from the present practice. So long as the Immigration Boards sat *in camera* every kind of story as to the doings of the boards and the reasons for their actions would get abroad, and all sorts of appeals would be made in this House for inquiry, and the Department would be in perpetual communication with hon. Gentlemen in order to explain away stories which had got about for the simple reason that the public had not an opportunity of hearing or seeing what went on within the walls of the court. He should consider that, and he thought at the present moment, so far as he was advised, it would be desirable that the Press should be admitted. He would like to take the opinion of the Immigration Boards to ascertain what they had to say on the matter, but he could see no reason why the Press should not be admitted. He thought the maintenance of this seclusion would do more harm than good. He had mentioned three points in which he thought improvement might be made. He could only say that he should anxiously watch the operation of the Act, knowing, at any rate, that if he failed to do his duty in the spirit which operated on both sides of the House on the formation of the Act he would hear of it in this House; consequently, there was every reason why he should keep up to the mark. The Act threw a new responsibility upon the Home Office; he did not deny that it was a most distracting one, for it occupied part of one's attention every day. It was a new burden—a burden which had to be borne as well as possible, but he could not forget that the people of this country expected that they should not go back on old traditions, and that while they had a right, or claimed a right, to deal with certain classes of immigrants, yet, subject to the law of the land, they ought to do all they could to maintain at the highest point the traditions of this country.

MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS (Kent, St. Augustine's) said he was sure that the right hon. Gentleman and his staff at the Home Office would do their best to see that the Act was administered according to the intention of Parliament, and with as little harshness as possible, and without detracting from the intentions of Parliament. As to his taunt regarding the late period of the late Parliament's existence at which the Act was passed, he would remind the House that the measure was the outcome of a Royal Commission, and that if the first Bill, introduced shortly after that Commission had reported, had been allowed to pass, the initial difficulties of administration would not have been so soon transferred to the right hon. Gentleman. The right hon. Gentleman complained that there did not appear to be any champions of the Bill on the Opposition side of the House. They had, however, to obey the Chairman's ruling, and he somewhat regretted that some hon. Members opposite had managed to evade the ruling of the Chair—["No, no!"]—and had managed to get in, at all events, a good many observations which——

MR. TREVELYAN (Yorks, W.R., Elland) asked if the right hon. Gentleman was justified in reflecting upon the ruling of the Chair.

*THE CHAIRMAN : I do not think that the right hon. Gentleman was reflecting upon the Chair.

MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS said he was not reflecting in the least upon the Chairman's ruling. Almost in every debate upon this question there had always been an acerbity introduced which was to be regretted in discussions in this House. The only point which they had to consider to-day was the administration of the Act. The hon. Member who spoke first based his whole case upon the assumption that the Immigration Boards were showing a prejudice against the political refugee. He accepted the view that the intention of Parliament was to prevent injustice to the political refugee, and the question at issue was whether, in the administration of the Act, the political refugee was treated with any unfairness. There had been cases brought forward by hon. Members who thought they illustrated injustice, and who cited them as examples of the exclusion of persons who were fleeing from persecution. But it had been admitted by the right hon. Gentleman that there was not sufficient evidence to condemn the Immigration Boards, and he would repeat the appeal of the right hon. Gentleman that they should wait a longer time before condemning those boards or the rules or the procedure under the rules. So far as he was concerned he took the responsibility for the work done in connection with the framing of the rules whilst he was in office. He did not remember whether these rules were absolutely completed when he left office; but he, of course, took the entire responsibility for the work of his Department up to that time, and he knew that the rules were framed without any desire to strain the Act one way or another beyond the strict intentions of Parliament. If there was found to be any possibility of injustice under these rules the right hon. Gentleman would no doubt take the same course for correcting that tendency that he himself would have taken if still in his place. He had carried out his assurances to the House with regard to the constitution of the Immigration Boards, and had put a large number of working men on the panels.

*MR. CREMER Yes, on the panels, but not on the boards.

MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS said that by placing working men on the panels it was thought that they would be placed on the boards. With regard to the Channel service, no grievance had been brought to his knowledge officially or privately; he thought the Act had been working with smoothness, and the reference to the hon. Member for Accrington and to Mr. Bowles showed that there was no partiality. He had seen the Act administered in several ports, and, considering the very great difficulties which surrounded the putting into operation of all new Acts, he thought it had worked with very considerable smoothness. They were quite as prepared to put these searching questions to men of the class referred to by the hon. Member for Accrington as to men coming from the borders of Russia.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE asked the right hon. Gentleman, as he had referred to his knowledge of the Channel service in a private capacity, whether the lines he referred to were exempted under the Act.

MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS could not say without reference, but would let the right hon. Baronet know. He could not tell what regulations had been made since the Home Secretary had announced his intention of inquiring carefully into the question as to the admission of the Press to the meetings of the Immigration Boards. It should be remembered that these meetings were not courts of law. The boards met chiefly for administrative purposes. The point was raised when the measure was under discussion in Parliament. He thought the authority itself should be left to consider the question of admitting the Press; but so far as he was concerned, if the right hon. Gentleman found it desirable to make an Order from headquarters on the subject he had no doubt he would do so from the best possible motives, and he would not take exception to his action.

*MR. GLADSTONE said he had omitted to state that the possibility of appointing local advisory committees to help the immigration boards in ascertaining accurately the facts concerning aliens was being considered.

COLONEL LOCKWOOD (Essex, Epping) said he wished to direct the attention of the House to the sufferings of dumb animals. He had considerable hesitation in again bringing this matter before the House, but not because he was in the least afraid that they would refuse to listen to him. He had always found the House generous in listening to the remarks he had to make on this subject. Nor were his feelings blunted by what he had heard in previous sessions from opponents on these benches. He was just as anxious now for the welfare of dumb animals as he was when he first entered the House. The reason why he was diffident in bringing the matter forward was that he was anxious not to spoil the cause he had so much at heart by making any over statement. He knew that there was no subject brought before the House from time to time that had suffered so much from over statement. He did not wish to accuse the inspectors under the Act or the medical profession of want of humanity. On the contrary, he looked upon the medical profession as the noblest profession in the world; and he was ready to acknowledge that if they asked for experiments on living animals it was because they believed that by them they could palliate human suffering. His argument was that the medical profession were liable to look upon experiments on living animals as an easier method of obtaining knowledge than research into science. He maintained that the discovery of the X-rays and of radium had done more to palliate human suffering and to help the medical profession than any number of experiments on living animals. One felt strongly on a subject like this by reading of the awful suffering inflicted on animals, and in the discussion of it there might be a tendency towards over-statement. He must say that no member of the English medical profession had ever been guilty of the ghastly and hideous cruelties which one read of as practised in other countries. Anti-vivisectionists had always been accused of over-stating their case; but there had been as much over-statement on the medical side. Years ago medical men said that science could not possibly be conducted unless they had a free hand to make experiments on live animals. Public opinion, however, became strong against vivisection. It was led by men who, no doubt, made over-statements, but who were so horrified at the cruelties which might be committed on dumb animals that eventually even the officials gave way. It took a great deal to make an impression on officials, even on the Minister of Education. Thereafter the Home Office consented to pass rules and regulations under which the experiments were conducted. With fuller information, he asked the Home Secretary to go further and exclude dogs altogether from the regulations. Dogs had a higher nervous organisation than other animals. He would say nothing about guinea-pigs and mice; but he did plead for the dogs. If the right hon. Gentleman could not see his way to exclude dogs from the operation of the Act, he asked him, in view of all that had taken place since the original Royal Commission sat, and in view of all the evidence adducible in this country and in various parts of the United States, to appoint a Committee, or an impartial Commission which should consider the evidence on both sides—the evidence of faddists like himself or the hon. Member for Edinburgh and St Andrew's Universities, and to make recommendations to the House.

*MR. TOMKINSON (Cheshire, Crewe) said he wished to thank the hon and gallant Gentleman for having initiated this discussion. It as an undoubted fact that experiments on living animals had increased enormously in late years. The large majority of these operations, it was true, were slight, such as hypodermic injections, but there was an increasing uneasy feeling that they resulted in a vast amount of cruelty. Naturally the greatest attention was paid to the experiments made on man's best friend amongst animals, the dog; but he hoped that that was not to be taken as an implication that other animals were outside consideration. The law stated that certain experiments should not be conducted unless there was a special permit by the Home Secretary. In many cases the law took away with one hand what it gave with the other. They knew perfectly well that the excuse that the animals were put under anæsthetics and were not sensible to the operation did not hold water. A dog must be made so insensible by chloroform that it would die, or else was very sensible. Curare was now very extensively used to take away vocal power, but it left the poor animal not insensible, and he was satisfied that great cruelty was often inflicted. In the *Physiological Journal,* which sold at 8s.—a prohibitory price to the public, and published so many months after the operations had taken place as to put them beyond the statute of limitations in which prosecutions were allowed—they would find it admitted that operations of the most awful kind were not infrequently performed upon animals. He remembered reading of operations performed on cats which, it was stated, no dog could survive. His own feeling was that they had no right to exploit the animal creation for their own purposes. He should like to see experiments on living animals absolutely prohibited; but he supposed they must be content with asking the House to appoint a small Committee to inquire into the working of this law and report.

SIR JOHN TUKE (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities) said he wished to congratulate the hon. and gallant Gentleman who raised this question on the moderation which he had exhibited in the expression of his views. He declared his conviction that there had been no abuse of the practice of vivisection. He knew that the Act, founded on the Royal Commission's Report, was carried out by honourable and upright gentlemen, and that physiologists and pathologists had no fear of any investigation that might be made. He admitted, although he held the opposite view, that there was a conviction on the part of a small minority that vivisection was cruel and unnecessary, and therefore for that reason he hoped there would be an inquiry. In almost all great communities for the purposes of public health such experiments were carried out in order to produce improvement of treatment. Thousands and thousands of these operations were carried out for the good of the human race, for the purpose of investigating such diseases as diphtheria, and the discovery of antidotes for such diseases as tetanus, hydrophobia and others. Out of 32,000 experiments carried out last year 30,000 were performed mainly for the good of the human race,

THE CHAIRMAN: This debate ought to be confined to the question of the administration of the Home Office in regard to this subject. It seems to be degenerating into a debate on vivisection, which is not in order.

SIR JOHN TUKE apologised and said that what he wished to assert was that the way in which this Act was carried out by the inspectors was thorough and complete. Misconceptions had arisen in the public mind which he was anxious to get discredited and therefore he wished the Home Secretary to appoint a Commission. It was manifestly impossible to fight out the question on the floor of this House; it must be investigated before some responsible authority.

*MR. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.) said he entirely sympathised with the right hon. and gallant Member for the Epping Division, but did not think he could at the present moment usefully add anything to what he had said. He desired, however, to call attention to another subject.

Mr. H. J. TENNANT rose to a point of order. A motion for reduction was now before the Committee and if another subject was to be discussed he would ask leave to withdraw the Motion.

Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER (Croydon) inquired if the withdrawal would preclude further discussion on the Home Office Vote.

*The CHAIRMAN: No; that will not preclude any further discussion on any other subject.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

Mr. CREMER said he wanted it to be quite clear whether, if the hon. Member withdrew his Motion, should they be precluded from any further discussion on the Aliens Bill.

*The CHAIRMAN: If another reduction is moved to the Home Office Vote before a reduction is moved on a later item the Aliens Bill can still be discussed.

*Mr. PICKERSGILL said the Motion for reduction which he had placed upon the Paper had reference to the Criminal Department of the Home Office; that was the Department which considered petitions from convicted persons. In England, unlike any other civilised country, there was no Court of Criminal Appeal, and a person convicted, however unjustly, had therefore no other remedy except to resort to the clemency of the Crown; he had to ask to be pardoned for an offence he had not committed. That was an utterly preposterous and ridiculous condition of things, but so long as it remained law they had to make the best of it. The Committee of Inquiry into the case of the unfortunate Mr. Beck found that the machinery for the investigation of these petitions was sadly deficient, and recommended that the legal element on the staff should be strengthened. The late Home Secretary denied that his staff required to be strengthened at all, and refused to carry out the recommendations of the Committee. His present object was to show that the machinery at the Home Office was weak, and to prove to the right hon. Gentleman who now presided at the Home Office that it was important to take steps to carry out that recommendation. It appeared from the Report of the Committee that not one of the fifteen petitions which Mr. Beck sent up during the five years he was incarcerated was ever brought to the notice of the Secretary of State for the Home Department. This seemed to him to raise an important constitutional question. The Secretary of State was entrusted with the highly responsible duty of advising the Crown in the exercise of its clemency, and it was a most important question from a constitutional point of view that we had certain officials at the Home Office who took it upon themselves absolutely to prevent petitions from convicted persons coming to the knowledge of the Secretary of State. According to the Report of the Committee the case did not rest there. It appeared that at all events the bulk of these fifteen petitions never reached even the Permanent Under Secretary of State. That gentleman in his evidence frankly stated that his subordinates were allowed to exercise a discretion with regard to the cases which they thought it necessary to bring to his notice. Therefore it was obvious that unless these subordinates were trained and qualified men the most gross miscarriages of justice might remain absolutely without remedy. He did not propose to go through the details of the Beck case; it was an old case and a most painful one. Nor did he desire to go into the details of the illustrations which the Committee gave as to the want of grasp of the legal principle and the real question concerned in that case displayed by the Home Office clerks in the minutes they wrote upon the papers. But it was perfectly clear that so long as this system prevailed, under which there was no security that any particular case would come, he would not say to the right hon. Gentleman's notice, but even to the notice of the Permanent Under-Secretary, it was absolutely essential that they should have among the subordinate officials of the Home Office gentlemen who were capable, first of all, of seizing the crucial points of a complicated case, and then, having seized them, of putting them into a proper memorandum for the consideration of the Secretary of State. The late Secretary of State for the Home Department declined to carry out the recommendation of the Committee on the ground that he could refer legal questions to the Law Officers of the Crown. That reply showed that the right hon. Gentleman had missed the real point of the criticism of the Committee, because it assumed that the crucial points of the case had been extracted and brought to his knowledge, whereas what the Committee complained of was that the subordinate officials of the Home Office had not those qualifications which enabled them to seize the crucial points and embody them in a memorandum. In the debates which took place on this question in the late Parliament the present Chancellor of the Exchequer expressed the opinion that the legal element of the staff at the Home Office required to be strengthened. He hoped therefore the present Secretary of State would see his way to carry out the recommendations of the Committee. The Beck case had excited a very strong feeling in the country, and the evidence taken before the Committee showed that there was a want of adequate legal training in the subordinate officials of the Home Office, upon whom great responsibility was thrown.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER said he regretted what seemed to be the unsympathetic reply of the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State with regard to the question of the inspection of uninspected laundries, and he desired to make one suggestion to the right hon. Gentleman by which, quite apart from any legislation, he thought a great deal might be done in the direction of inspection. They were all quite aware of the fact that there were a great number of places where a trade was carried on for profit which were not inspected by the factory inspectors, in respect to which a great deal could be done without legislation. He desired to draw the right hon. Gentleman's attention to what had been done in a very recent period by the Bishop of London. His Lordship invited all persons over whom he had any authority who were interested in any of these institutions where work was being carried on without inspection to consider this matter and to report to him as to what action they could take. He warned them that public opinion would not continue to tolerate the carrying on of this work without inspection, and suggested that they should bring their institutions voluntarily under the control of the Home Office. Having read of the horrors which took place in some of these places in regard to which there was no inspection, he (Mr. Arnold-Forster) would suggest to the right hon. Gentleman that he should second the efforts of the Bishop of London. He believed that if an appeal of that kind were made they would have an answer from those responsible, and in that way they would know the magnitude of the evil, and what were the institutions which thought it necessary, for reasons which appeared to them good and to him bad, to withdraw from the supervision of the law.

*MR. GLADSTONE said he should be very glad to look into the matter referred to by the right hon. Gentleman, and see if anything could be done. Though they could not do everything at once, he would look into the matter. With regard to the question raised by his hon. and gallant friend, he must point out that, of course, he had to administer the Act relating to vivisection—perhaps one of the most disagreeable duties he had to perform—and all he could say was that so far as the administration of that Act was concerned he had taken as much care as possible. The hon. and gallant Gentleman asked whether dogs could not be excluded from vivisection, but he did not think that was possible without legislation. The hon. Member for Edinburgh and St. Andrews Universities asked whether a Committee or Commission could be appointed to inquire into the question. That was a matter to which he should certainly give his attention, because it was now nearly thirty years since the last inquiry was held on the subject, and he would consider whether it was desirable to hold another inquiry. The hon. Member for Bethnal Green raised a very important question with regard to the legal training of officials at the Home Office. With all respect to the gentlemen who composed the Commission of Inquiry into the Beck case, he ventured to disagree with some of their conclusions. He did not agree that the Home Office was wanting in legal training, nor did he think, with all respect to the legal profession, that legal training was precisely what was wanted. They certainly wanted very high qualities, but he believed that those qualities were got by service in the Home Office, and in that respect he could not speak too highly of the work that was done daily by the subordinate staff of the Home Office. He quite agreed that in the case referred to a mistake was made, but mistakes were made by other people: even in the case of the most eminent judges they could have no guarantee against mistakes. What was wanted was an adequate staff of trained men. They had trained men, but he thought that the staff wanted strengthening, and he had already made a proposal to the Chancellor of the Exchequer on the point. With regard to the question of a court of criminal appeal, that of course must be considered in relation to the question of Home Office administration, and vice versa; but the whole matter was now under consideration.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR (Liverpool, Scotland) said the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Croydon had asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department to ascertain which conventual laundries were willing to have inspection and which not. That was a matter he would leave to the right hon. Gentleman in consultation with those who controlled those institutions. He only wished to say that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Croydon, who, he regretted, was not now in his place, in making this recommendation spoke of the horrors that occurred in certain establishments. Knowing the opinions and the traditions of the right hon. Gentleman, he thought he could pretty well understand what he meant. He wished the right hon. Gentleman had spoken a little more frankly, and he would have been able to say in reply that anybody who brought a charge of that kind against the devoted women who managed these laundries in the religion to which he belonged was saying something which was not only contrary to the truth but to decency and Christian feeling.

Mr. CLAUDE HAY (Shoreditch, Hoxton) said he ventured to ask a Question as to the conditions under which cab drivers' licences were given and taken away, and also a Question as to the fee charged for such licences. They all knew that the work of a cabman was not becoming easier day by day, and that therefore any new charge placed upon his calling was a very serious burden upon his weekly budget. He understood that the right hon. Gentleman had withheld the extra 2s. 6d., which was more or less the fee of the Home Office, but there still remained a fee of 7s. 6d. for the cabman to pay, which was far too high. The time had come for these fees to be reduced, and nothing more than a mere nominal fee for registration made.

And, it being half-past Seven of the clock, the Chairman left the Chair to make his Report to the House.

Committee report Progress; to sit again this evening.

EVENING SITTING.

SUPPLY [1st Allotted Day].

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. Emmott (Oldham), in the Chair.]

CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS ESTIMATES, 1906-7 (Vote on Account).

Motion made, and Question proposed, That a sum, not exceeding £21,410,000, be granted to His Majesty, on account, for or towards defraying the Charges for the following Civil Services and Revenue Departments for the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1907, viz.:—

CIVIL SERVICES.

Class II.

United Kingdom and England.

	£
Home Office - - - -	66,000
Class V.	
Diplomatic and Consular Services - - - -	250,000
Class II.	
United Kingdom and England.	
Local Government Board -	86,000

CLASS I.

	£
Royal Palaces - - -	20,000
Osborne - - - - -	8,000
Royal Parks and Pleasure Gardens - - - . -	45,000
Houses of Parliament Buildings	20,000
Miscellaneous Legal Buildings, Great Britain - - -	30,000
Art and Science Buildings, Great Britain - - -	25,000
Diplomatic and Consular Buildings - - - - - -	54,000
Revenue Buildings . -	196,000
Public Buildings, Great Britain	200,000
Surveys of the United Kingdom	90,000
Harbours under the Board of Trade - - - -	6,000
Peterhead Harbour - -	10,000
Rates on Government Property	295,000
Public Works and Buildings, Ireland - - - -	110,000
Railways, Ireland - -	35,000

CLASS II.

UNITED KINGDOM AND ENGLAND.

House of Lords Offices - -	7,000
House of Commons Offices -	15,000
Treasury and Subordinate Departments - - -	40,000
Foreign Office - - -	24,000
Colonial Office - - -	25,000
Privy Council Office, etc. -	4,000
Board of Trade - - -	85,000
Mercantile Marine Services -	32,000
Bankruptcy Department of the Board of Trade - - -	3
Board of Agriculture and Fisheries - - - -	55,000
Charity Commission - -	15,000
Civil Service Commission -	17,000
Exchequer and Audit Department - - - - -	25,000
Friendly Societies Registry -	3,000
Lunacy Commission - -	5,000
Mint (including Coinage) -	5
National Debt Office - -	6,000
Public Record Office - -	10,000
Public Works Loan Commission - - - - - -	1,000
Registrar-General's Office -	15,000
Stationery and Printing -	330,000
Woods, Forests, &c., Office of	8,000
Works and Public Buildings, Office of - - - -	34,000
Secret Service - - -	40,000

SCOTLAND.

	£
Secretary for Scotland, Office of - - - - - -	25,000
Fishery Board - - -	5,000
Lunacy Commission - -	2,500
Registrar-General's Office -	1,500
Local Government Board -	5,000

IRELAND.

Lord-Lieutenant's Household	2,000
Chief Secretary for Ireland -	12,000
Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction -	80,000
Charitable Donations and Bequests Office - - -	1,000
Local Government Board -	25,000
Public Record Office -	2,000
Public Works Office - -	16,000
Registrar-General's Office -	5,000
Valuation and Boundary Survey - - - - -	6,000

CLASS III.

UNITED KINGDOM AND ENGLAND.

Law Charges - - -	40,000
Miscellaneous Legal Expenses	28,000
Supreme Court of Judicature	140,000
Land Registry - - -	18,000
County Courts - - -	5
Police, England and Wales -	13,000
Prisons, England and the Colonies - - - -	340,000
Reformatory and Industrial Schools, Great Britain -	130,000
Broadmoor Criminal Lunatic Asylum - - - -	12,000

SCOTLAND.

Law Charges and Courts of Law - - - - -	30,000
Register House, Edinburgh -	15,000
Crofters Commission, Scotland	2,000
Prisons, Scotland - - -	37,000

IRELAND.

Law Charges and Criminal Prosecutions - - -	30,000
Supreme Court of Judicature, and other Legal Departments - - - -	43,000
Land Commission - - -	90,000
County Court Officers, &c. -	45,000
Dublin Metropolitan Police -	60,000
Royal Irish Constabulary -	600,000
Prisons, Ireland - - -	52,000
Reformatory and Industrial Schools - - - -	55,000
Dundrum Criminal Lunatic Asylum - - - -	4,000

Class IV.

United Kingdom and England.

	£
Board of Education - -	7,000,000
British Museum - - -	70,000
National Gallery - - -	10,000
National Portrait Gallery -	3,000
Wallace Collection - -	3,000
Scientific Investigation, etc. -	24,000
Universities and Colleges, Great Britain and Intermediate Education, Wales	60,000

Scotland.

Public Education - - -	850,000
National Gallery - - -	5,000

Ireland.

Public Education - - -	760,000
Endowed Schools Commissioners - - - -	400
National Gallery - - -	2,500
Queen's Colleges - - -	2,500

Class V.

Colonial Services - - -	370,000
Telegraph Subsidies and Pacific Cable - - -	30,000
Cyprus (Grant in Aid) - -	27,000

Class VI.

Superannuation and Retired Allowances - - -	300,000
Miscellaneous Charitable and other Allowances - -	1,150
Hospitals and Charities, Ireland - - - - -	17,000
Savings Banks and Friendly Societies Deficiencies -	— —

Class VII.

Temporary Commissions -	20,000
Miscellaneous Expenses -	10,437
Repayments to the Local Loans Fund - - -	— —
Ireland Development Grant -	100,000
Total for Civil Services	£13,980,000

REVENUE DEPARTMENTS.

Customs - - - -	350,000
Inland Revenue - - -	830,000
Post Office - - - -	6,250,000
Total for Revenue Departments - - -	£7,430,000
Grand Total -	£21,410,000."

Mr. BOLAND (Kerry, S.) said the morning sitting had been devoted to the discussion of Home Office questions, but he desired for a few moments to draw attention to the second part of the Paper, which dealt with the diplomatic and Consular services. He desired to-night to deal only with the Consular Services, and that from an Irish point of view, it being his contention that the Consular services could and should be made of very great service to the people of Ireland. With the exception of two the Consular Reports were absolutely useless to the people of Ireland. In the Estimates presented there was an increase of £6,000 put down to cover Consular services, which included an item of £2,420 for office expenses and fee allowances. He recognised that the last Government met this demand to a slight extent. It arranged that the Reports issued this year were to contain a special reference to the existence or non-existence of an Irish trade. But that only touched the fringe of the question. There was nothing of a permanent improvement in this, and unless the right steps were taken, the year 1907 and succeeding years would find the Consular Reports as useless to Irish traders as they had been in the past. They would, he believed, be read this year because of the temporary improvement to which he had alluded. Why were they useless? They were useless because, with the exception of the Boston and Philadelphia Reports, no separate statistics were given of Irish trade. What advantage was it to them in Ireland to read that 231,202 tons of cement were sent to the United Kingdom from Belgium, or that Belgium took 8,120 horses from the United Kingdom. They wished to know what the Irish trade in these two articles was. If such information were given the Reports would become of some value. And let the Committee remember that this same Report from which he quoted did give separate statistics, as regarded not only Australia, Canada and India, but also the Straits Settlements. It was not because of the volume of the trade that a separate table was given to the Straits Settlement, as a mere glance at the tables would prove. Let them take, on the other hand, the Boston Report, dated August 1905. It was, as regards the scheme of statistics, a model on which he would advise the right hon.

Gentleman the Secretary of State to instruct his Consuls to found their Reports. Not only were the British Colonies in that Report separately treated, but Ireland's figures were kept distinct from England; for example, one read that 82,549 pairs of boots and shoes were sent from Boston to Ireland. That information was of some use to them. They were endeavouring to promote their own industries. What possible advantage could they in Ireland have gained from the bald statement that 670,000 pairs of boots and shoes went to the United Kingdom. Again, to take a somewhat unexpected item—£4,553 worth of ginger ale or ginger beer was imported into Boston from Ireland; and the item—only £1,779 worth of salted mackerel—made them in Ireland ask why this small amount. Enough had been said as to this one Report. The only Reports from which Ireland got an idea as to how she stood, commercially speaking, were from Boston and Philadelphia. He did not propose to allude specifically to other Reports on this point of deficiency, but he would just quote from the Report from Southern Italy issued a few weeks ago. It was the first published that contained a paragraph about Irish goods, and the paragraph concluded—

> "As the custom house does not differentiate between imports from Ireland, but mentions only imports from the United Kingdom, absolutely correct statistics are not available."

That would probably also be the tenour of the reply from the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs—

> "It does not rest with us. It is the foreign Governments which do not provide the facilities."

If that were so it was the duty of the Government to make representations to those Governments, requesting them to have the distinction between Irish and English imports recognised at the various custom houses. If it was found possible at Boston, why should it not be possible at Naples? At any rate it was the duty of the Government to try. They must remember too that by their union they had undertaken to do for Ireland what she would do for herself. Indeed some people in England thought that the Government could do it better than Ireland herself could. He would ask them to remember that there were old ties, not only of friendship, but of a commercial nature, between many of these foreign countries and Ireland—the Low Countries, France and Spain, for example. There was a strong industrial revival at work in Ireland. It was already seeking to extend its trade with foreign countries. Ireland therefore was entitled to demand that she should not be deprived of the information that was vital to her, because it was easier for the Government officials, if they were permitted, to swamp her under that curious phrase, "the United Kingdom." When he first looked at the trade and navigation monthly reports, he got a gleam of hope because he saw the heading "British and Irish Produce," but on examination it was evident that this heading was adopted because they wanted some adjective. "United Kingdom Produce" would not be so grammatical, and the word "Irish" merely appeared as a heading. There was not a word or a figure to justify its inclusion. In Ireland they were prepared to second the efforts of the Government and to do away, as far as they could, with the objections which foreign countries might raise on this sort of difficulty. They intended to make use of the Trade Marks Act when it came into operation on April 1st. Indeed, the arrangements for the registration of an Irish national trade mark were now well advanced. It was their hope, and he believed that that hope would be justified, that every piece of lace that left Kerry or Connemara, every package of genuine butter, and every piece of agricultural machinery would have that Irish trade mark upon it. That in itself would render it easy for the customs houses abroad to make the distinction between Irish and English goods a test of quality and excellence as well as of origin. It would not suffice for the total exports to be checked as they left the Irish ports. They had not at present a sufficient amount of trade to maintain a direct shipping service with foreign countries, although within the last two years a line between Tréport and Dublin had been maintained. Irish goods must in the majority of cases go to the Continent *viâ* England. They wanted to know how Irish goods were distributed, and the Consular Reports, as far as he knew, were the only means to hand for obtaining that information. This Government, he should judge from the result of the General Election and certain passages in the King's Speech, would not be opposed to statistics. He had indicated one improvement which would be of real use. It would be complementary to that other information they required as regards the trade between Ireland and England. The Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Education had agitated for that for years past. The Irish Department of Agriculture had now joined in making that demand, as a reference to its quarterly journal would show. Ireland had need of these statistics, and England should not oppose obstacles in the way of their acquisition. In conclusion he would say just a word generally about the Consular Service. He recognised that at busy ports there were many things to be attended to, the entry and clearing of vessels, etc., and that a Consul's time was often fully occupied during those very hours when he could best acquire the information about Irish and English trade. Other people's offices closed as well as his, and he (Mr. Boland) would urge that this difficulty should be taken into account when the service was being overhauled, as he trusted it would be. The Reports were capable of being made extremely valuable to Ireland, and he admitted that it was for this purpose that he had thrown out these suggestions. Ireland had an economic sense, in spite of what critics might say, and although the great question of the land had to a certain extent overshadowed other vital matters, yet, as that was in process of being settled, the true value of these other matters was disclosing itself. They were determined to build themselves up industrially at home, and to win for Ireland a place in the world's commerce. He therefore claimed that as the Government had undertaken to promote their well-being, the Government must use their Consular Service for the good of Ireland as well as for the good of this country. He moved to reduce the Vote by £100.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Item, Class 5, Vote 1 (Diplomatic and Consular Services), be reduced by £100."—(*Mr. Boland.*)

Mr. PAUL (Northampton) desired to draw attention to a question which should be of interest to the community, and for the benefit of the Irish Members he suggested that it was of as much interest to Ireland as to any part of the United Kingdom. In this Vote on Account there was set apart for Diplomatic and Consular Services £500,000. When Alexander visited Diogenes, and found him in his tub—which he neither rolled nor thumped—he asked if there was anything he could do for him. Diogenes replied, "Yes, you can get out of my light." If they asked the British manufacturer whether there was anything the Government could do for him, he would reply, "Yes, let me alone." That, probably, would be the rule. But there was the exception. The manufacturers wanted information. They did not need to be told what to do with it when they had it; they could find that out for themselves. They wanted the information in plain words and plain figures, and he suggested that the Consuls were the proper persons to give it. They did not expect much from great personages like ambassadors and ministers. Their business was high politics. What they had to do was to keep the peace, and counteract the influence of that foul excrescence on journalism—the Yellow Press—both at home and abroad. If any member of the Committee wanted to realise what a great diplomatist could do for his country in the way of asserting the first duty of England in doubtful and perilous times, he should read Sir A. Lyall's Life of Lord Dufferin, and see what that prince of diplomatists did with the Sultan of Turkey and the Ameer of Afghanistan. But what was a Consul? He was not an Imperial diplomatist. He was, or ought to be, a man of business, intimately familiar with all the commercial facts and surroundings of the place in which he resided. He had been told, and he quite believed it, that some Consuls had in former times been appointed on the theory that they could not have been created for nothing, and that there was nothing else for which they were fit. But he was sure his right hon. friend would not select that particular method of justifying the doctrine of final causes. He was aware that there were a few Consuls, he believed very few, who had diplomatic functions to discharge, but the rest of them, although they might occasionally have to interfere with a fellow-citizen who had drunk the wrong sort of wine, had not to sing "Rule Britannia," or to uphold the honour of the flag, but to elicit and to give commercial information. As the Committee knew, trade no longer followed the flag, but followed the consumer. It had nothing to do with patriotic sentiment, it had nothing to do with national boundaries. He had the honour to represent a manufacturing constituency. His constituents made boots for the whole world. Everyone wanted boots. Whether he wanted them to kick his opponent or whether he wanted to run away from him, boots were equally handy. But different people did not at all times want the same kind of boots, and so what the manufacturing community desired to know was the particular kind of boot, or whatever it might be, which was wanted in a particular place at a particular time. He was well aware of the number and value of Consular Reports, but they took time to compose and to print. When they appeared they were most valuable as historical works, and as books of reference, but they did not always give the exact momentary information which was desired. It was as if the Government, meaning to confer a boon upon the travelling public, were to present them with a number of old Bradshaws, whose partial accuracy would be their most dangerous feature. After all, what they wanted to know was not what was going on three or four months ago, but what was going on now. He believed that to be the greatest benefit, the only benefit, which the Government could confer upon the trade of the country. In trade, if anywhere, knowledge was power. Our manufacturers had to learn not only what was most agreeable and most in accordance with their habits for them to make, but those of them who had business in foreign countries had to learn what it was that foreigners desired and what it was for which they were willing to pay. His right hon. friend might say that any arrangement of this kind for creating what he should like to see, an Intelligence Department in connection with the Foreign Office, to which our Consuls might regularly contribute, would cost a good deal of money, and they could no more get money out of the Chancellor of the Exchequer than they could get blood out of a stone. He was not quite sure, having cast his eye over the Vote, which was diplomatic as well as consular, that they might not save in one part of it what they increased in another. Diplomatists were not overpaid. But he was not so sure that there might not be in some cases too many of them. He remembered being told in a foreign capital, a great many years ago—he would not give the slightest inkling of what the capital was, and he invited them to consider that the diplomatist to whom he alluded was dead and buried — that the Ambassador devoted most of his time to the game of bridge. He inquired of a British resident whether that charge was true. He said—

> "No, it is most unjust. I have never known his Excellency indifferent to the rival claims of poker."

He was told that neither of these games could be played in solitude, and a slight reduction of the numbers in that particular Embassy or Legation—he would not say which it was—might have been productive of some benefit, not only to the diplomatic staff but even to their chief. If this reform did cost a little money it would be money well bestowed. His right hon. friend was peculiarly well qualified to carry out this task. He was acquainted with many kinds of business, he was a land owner, and he had been the chairman of a great railway and the director of a bank. He had, in Lord Fitzmaurice, a colleague of great ability and experience; he was himself not many years ago Under-Secretary in the office over which he now presided, and had special charge of the commercial department. His appointment to the great office which he now held was greeted with universal satisfaction by all parties and all classes in this country. His immediate predecessor, Lord Lansdowne, earned for himself a fine and just reputation by the treaty which he concluded with the Republic of France and the alliance which he established with the Empire of Japan. If the right hon. Gentleman took up this question and carried it out he would earn what he was sure he would value far more than any object of personal ambition, namely, the gratitude of the whole industrial community, and especially of the working classes, upon whose self-sacrificing labours the commercial prosperity of every country must in the last resort depend.

MR. CHARLES DEVLIN (Galway) said the Consular Reports put before the Committee contained very valuable information with regard to the trade coming to and from this country. It was the misfortune of Ireland in this matter to be mixed up with the interests of this country. Year in and year out the Irish Members had asked that their interests in this question should be separated, because they were absolutely swamped by the figures which came out in those Reports. The difficulties which had been mentioned were not very great. The trade from Ireland to the United States and to Canada was a direct trade. Some years ago a service was inaugurated between the ports of Canada and Ireland, and in order that that service might continue and with the object of promoting trade the Canadian Government gave a subsidy, and they had to-day a line of steamers provided that carried goods between Ireland and Canada. Those steamers now carried the bulk of the trade between the two countries, and the right hon. Gentleman knew perfectly well what steamers and sailing vessels were trading direct between Ireland and the United States. There would not be very great difficulty in getting the statistics of that important trade, and the trade from Ireland to European ports certainly ought to be easily obtained. This was a matter of much importance to Ireland. How was it possible for them to know whether the trade of Ireland was increasing or decreasing if they were not furnished with these statistics. Every other country but Ireland could get such figures. They would be told that they were a part of the United Kingdom and were provided with statistics just in the same way as other parts of the Kingdom. He would point out that Ireland paid towards this service and why should she not share in the benefits this service might give? Every year difficulties had been put in the way which, he maintained, were only imaginary. If Ireland had the administration of these affairs in her own hands the matter could be arranged in a week.

*SIR C. HILL (Shrewsbury) said the hon. Member for Northampton had struck a note which would appeal to anybody who had been connected with the Foreign Office or the Consular Service when he advocated more expenditure upon that service. If that were done the Government could give larger salaries to their Consuls, and then they could expect more work from them. It was extremely difficult for Consuls appointed to a service to acquire that complete knowledge of commercial affairs which was expected to be of use to experts in commercial undertakings. It was extremely difficult, for instance, for a man appointed to a place like Valparaiso to arrive there and make himself at once acquainted with all the details of importance to business firms at home. He would have to telegraph his information at great expense, and even then he doubted whether it would be news to the commercial merchants by the time they received it in this country. It was quite possible for merchants in England either to take in the commercial newspapers of the ports in which they were interested, or else have agents there who would telegraph the news in which they were interested. He did not think a Consular officer could be expected to supply information which would be immediately useful to any particular trade. He had had the honour of carrying out an inspection of the Consulates in the West Indies and on the Spanish Main. He had spent most of his life in the Foreign Office and had had the opportunity of knowing many of the Consuls in different parts of the world, and he had always found that our Consuls were most anxious to give the best possible information at the earliest possible moment. He knew too, from his experience at the Foreign Office, that if hon. Members addressed themselves to the heads of the Commercial Department or the Consular Department, they would readily receive any information which it was in the power of those officials to give.

MR. NORMAN (Wolverhampton, S.) said that, in reply to a Question recently put by him, the Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Trade alluded to new instructions that were to be despatched to members of the Consular Service. If the Secretary of State would say when those instructions would be issued, and whether they would first be submitted to the House or a Committee of the Whole House, criticism on the Consular Service might usefully be deferred.

*LORD BALCARRES (Lancashire, Chorley) said he regretted the tone which had been adopted by the hon. Member for Northampton in his criticism of their Consuls and the Consular system. He did not know whether it was a reminiscence or a criticism of what he considered to be the system to-day, but he had said that some Consuls were appointed because there was nothing else for them to do.

MR. PAUL: I was alluding to past days.

*LORD BALCARRES said his experience of Consuls and the Consular Service was that there was no department in which a larger amount of voluntary and unpaid labour was given to the State. The hon. Member opposite had stated that these Consuls had no diplomatic functions. That was, of course, absolutely true, but one of the chief functions of a Consul was to prevent and ward off diplomatic incidents, and were it not for the tact and judgment which, in his opinion, their Consuls showed all over the world the work of the Foreign Office would be very much more serious than it was at the present moment. As regarded the criticism that the Consular Reports were not up to date, that held good a few years ago, but that criticism was no longer founded upon fact. The delay in the publication of these Reports was infinitesimal, and great credit was due to the printing department of the State and the editorial department of the Foreign Office for the promptness with which these excellent Reports were brought out. He had not, however, risen to make a defence of the Consular system, although he was quite ready to defend it in case it was seriously attacked. He wanted to ask the right hon. Gentleman a question which might perhaps not be considered a fair one, but if the right hon. Gentleman told him that this was his opinion he would abide by his decision. Two or three days ago the Foreign Secretary, in Answer to a Question put to him by the right hon. Baronet the Member for the Forest of Dean, stated that the Brussels Convention to which this country became a party in November 1903, could not come up for consideration by the Government until five years from that date. If he was correct, he understood that the moment for denouncing that treaty (if such a course was decided upon) would not arise until next year at the earliest. He knew that hon. Members opposite took a strong view about the Brussels Convention. The Convention might be good or bad, but at any rate the ancient fiction that it had raised the price of sugar had been, he imagined, long since abandoned. [MINISTERIAL cries of "Oh."] If that argument were still adhered to they would be equally justified in saying that owing to the Convention the price of sugar had now fallen to a very low average. In view of the fact that the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs and his colleagues would probably be in office when this Convention would come up for revision, and, in view of the fact that enormous interests were being created under the Convention in British Colonies, he hoped the right hon. Gentleman would consider the propriety of giving the earliest possible notice to the parties interested if it was the intention of the Government to denounce the Convention.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir EDWARD GREY, Northumberland, Berwick): A certain number of Questions have accumulated already, and perhaps I had better dispose of them at once. In Answer to the Question put to me by the noble Lord the Member for Chorley, I agree that, whenever a decision is come to as to what the policy of this country is to be in future in regard to the Sugar Convention, that decision should be announced as soon as possible. That is in the interests of the certainty of trade. But I must point out to the noble Lord that the Sugar Convention itself has, in my opinion, introduced an element of uncertainty. We are parties to that Convention at the present moment. As parties to it we, the great consuming country, have rendered ourselves liable to be bound by the decision of the other members of the Convention, who are the producers; and at any moment, it seems to me the producers, forming the majority of the Convention, may so use their position and their preponderance on the Convention as to make it necessary for the consuming country to reconsider its position. That is an element of uncertainty which is inherent in the Convention itself; and, so long as we remain a party to the Convention, that element of uncertainty must remain. With regard to the future, it is clear that we cannot withdraw before 1908; and to do that it is necessary to give notice in September, 1907. Even if the Government gave notice to-day we could not withdraw before September 1908; and, therefore, the Government feel, and I think rightly feel, that a statement of their policy in regard to the Sugar Convention is not so pressing and urgent at the present moment as some other matters, seeing that whatever we were to decide now, no action could follow upon it before September 1908. That is how the matter stands at the present moment. With regard to the Consular service, the Foreign Office does from time to time issue instructions to the Consuls. It is not desirable, indeed, it would hamper the Foreign Office, that those instructions should be submitted to a Committee of that House before they are issued. The instructions I have in contemplation relate to matters of detail, and I do not think these matters of detail should be committed to a Committee of this House. On the other hand, if anybody either inside or outside the House has any suggestion to make with regard to matters of detail upon which they think that Consuls should be instructed I shall be very glad to receive those suggestions, but I do not think it is necessary that a Committee should be formed to review the whole question of instructions to Consuls.

MR. NORMAN: I understood the Answer given to my Question by the Secretary to the Board of Trade did not refer merely to departmental details. My Question dealt with the whole question of greater efficiency in the Consular service, and I understood that that matter was under consideration, and that other instructions dealing with various matters were being considered. I had no idea that they were merely departmental details.

*SIR EDWARD GREY: I have hardly the Question in my mind, but if it is a Question of the general efficiency of Consuls, we come to the point raised by the hon. Member for Northampton. I think that before the House goes into the question whether we should have a Committee to consider the whole Consular service we ought to realise how much has been done by the Consular service; and I would suggest that a new Parliament should, at any rate, spend some time in studying the Consular Reports, and seeing how the service is managed before it rushes to the conclusion that it is in a condition of inefficiency. I think before the House appoints a Committee to overhaul a great branch of the public service it ought to be proved that that service is in such a condition that it is not being properly worked, and properly administered by the Department concerned. I welcome the maiden speech in this House of the hon. Member for Shrewsbury who speaks with knowledge on questions of this kind. The hon. Gentleman has spent many years in giving public service to the State inside the Foreign Office, and I trust that the information and knowledge which he has acquired as a public servant will be of benefit to the House. I fully admit that in past years there has been great ground for complaint in regard to the Consular service. I do not mean that individual Consular servants have not done their best, but I think that some years ago the whole method of appointment to the Consular service was unsatisfactory. A good deal has been done to remedy that state of things. The Consular service has now been turned into a regular service which must be entered by examination; and, instead of people being appointed without close reference to their qualifications, it is now a service which must be entered by examination like other services for which considerable initial qualifications are required before a young man can enter. Although the right of making exceptions has been retained, the practice of appointing to an important Consular post people from outside the service altogether, has in recent years been largely discontinued. Our intention now is that the Consular service should only be entered by young men, after examination, who have special *prima facie* qualifications for the service, and that important posts should be filled up by men who have entered the public service by showing that they have the qualifications for it. That is a considerable change. Among the qualifications is not only the knowledge of languages, but the knowledge of British commercial law, of shipping law, of exchange, of contracts, of marine insurance, and so forth, and candidates will be considered specially qualified to compete who have a certain amount of legal or university training, and among other special qualifications will be that of having served for three years in a commercial house before entering the service. I think that ought to go long a way towards getting into the Consular service young men who have shown some inclination or aptitude for business; and, getting these men into the public service and keeping the higher posts for promotion, the House should feel that a considerable step has been taken towards securing that the Consular service will be composed not only of men of education and a knowledge of languages, but also a certain amount of business training, It is difficult to get what you call men of business in the same sense in which men of business are described, because you cannot allow the men to engage in trade, their whole time and energies must be devoted to the service of the State. You cannot well take out of business men who have already made a considerable start in business and put them into the Consular service for this reason. There are two classes of men in business—the successful and the unsuccessful—and if we were to apply to business houses and so forth to get men for the Consular service, the men we would get would be those who had not proved themselves most successful. I think our policy should be to attract men to the Consular service, and give them to understand that they must devote a certain amount of attention to business, not necessarily with the view of entering business, but with the view of qualifying for appointments as Consuls. Now with regard to Consular reports I think these have been vastly improved in recent years. I fully admit that the improvement is partly the result of the debates in this House, and partly because the House of Commons has constantly called attention to the need of good Consular reports. In the old days the House was frequently finding fault with the Consular reports. I am told that nowadays, whereas it used to be said that the American Consular reports were much superior to our Consular reports, there have lately been signs in the United States of commending the British Consular reports as being in some ways superior to their own. Annual reports we must continue to have; I did not understand the hon. Member to suggest that the annual reports should be discontinued. I think they will always be a most valuable part of the Consul's work in providing information. The great movements of trade are not spasmodic and sudden movements; they are gradual movements, and they ought to be, and can only be shown satisfactorily in the annual reports. In fact the annual reports have pointed out from year to year the success in some countries abroad of German merchants as compared with British merchants, and they have pointed out the way in which German merchants—not in all cases, for I do not admit that German trade has been gaining more than British trade—have made more progress than British merchants. Now and then in some South American countries we find that German trade has made conspicuous progress, and we find from the annual reports how that has been done by giving special attention to the language of the country, or to the special needs of the country. I remember that some time ago I was told that German trade had progressed very much in certain South American Republics in a certain class of cotton goods. I asked a British manufacturer if that was so, and he replied, —

"Yes, years ago, but now we have got the trade. A small demand grew up for certain goods. The Germans took advantage of that and adapted their machinery to the making of this particular class of goods. I could not get the British manufacturers to adapt their machinery for this class of cotton goods, being what the people in that particular part of the world wanted."

Presently the trade, which was at first small, became a very large trade, and British manufacturers having had their attention called to the fact—I dare-say partly by the Consular reports—turned their attention to the matter and got a large share of the trade which they might have had in earlier years if they had turned their attention to it. In that way I think Consular reports may be of great service. No doubt there are also sudden and spasmodic movements of trade of which it is desirable that the manufacturer in this country should be able to take advantage. But there is a good deal published besides the annual Reports. There is the monthly report of the Board of Trade, and information is also given regarding tenders which are invited abroad. I think my hon. friend the Member for Northampton must realise that a Consul does not regard himself as restricted solely to the annual Report, and whenever information is obtained which should not wait for the annual Report it is given either to the *Labour Gazette* or sent to the Foreign Office and published at the time. But my hon. friend does not intend to draw up any general indictment against the Consular or diplomatic service, and, although he told one story at the expense of the diplomatic service, he also paid a great tribute to our representatives abroad and showed that he was not wanting in appreciation of their work. I admit that there have been shortcomings in past years, but on going back to the Foreign Office, after an absence of ten years, I find markedly that a considerable improvement has been made. That improvement is going on, and will go on, and I would say to the House frankly that we do regard it as the duty of Consulates abroad to be centres of information from which that information should be communicated in the most convenient and opportune manner.

I now come to the particular point of the Amendment proposed by the hon. Member for South Kerry. First of all let me assure him that the improvement from the point of view of Ireland—an improvement which was made a year or two ago at the request of himself and his friends—will certainly be continued. That improvement was to record in the Consuls' annual Reports, and to take special notice of the movements of Irish trade, to devote special paragraphs to Irish trade for the information of Ireland. That has only been done in the last two Reports, but it is a general instruction to the Consuls, and I shall do my best to see that they continue to act upon it. But the hon. Member said quite rightly that the general instruction with regard to Ireland was of comparatively little value at the present time, because the Consuls abroad, though they may be instructed to give special information about Ireland, and may be anxious to do it, cannot get the information, because it is not available in the trade returns of foreign countries—that is to say, that Irish imports, and exports to Ireland, are lumped together under the heading, "United Kingdom," and that, therefore, the Consuls themselves, however much they may wish to do so, cannot extract the figures with reference to Irish trade. If that is so, we must get foreign countries to help us. We must ask them to keep their records of trade so as to show separately the statistics of Irish imports, and of exports to Ireland. I think the hon. Member said that only two places do so at the present time—Boston and Philadelphia. I can see no objection whatever to making the request to foreign countries. I will do my best, not only to make the request to foreign countries, but to make it as sympathetically as possible. Meanwhile I am willing to continue the instruction that Consuls should obtain information whereever possible, but I do not see how they can do that completely. My only fear is, not that there will be any difficulty in making their request, but whether foreign countries may not make objections because it is putting extra trouble and expense on the custom house officers. I should like to be able to meet that objection. In Ireland there is a movement to take advantage of a recent Act in order to establish an Irish trade mark. I think if the hon. Member will let me wait until I can be assured that an Irish trade mark has been established, or is on the point of being established, that would be an exceedingly good peg on which to hang the requests to foreign Governments. They might say, "It is all very well to ask us to do this, but why ask us to take extra trouble on your account?" If I could go to them and say that Ireland has established a special trade mark, I think the request would not seem unreasonable or trivial. That would show that the request is one in which we ourselves are taking an interest, while the fact of Ireland having such a trade mark would make it very easy for their custom house officers to keep separate records of imports into those countries from Ireland. I should like to be able to put it in that way, and if it be the case that there is this movement I should certainly propose to take advantage of it in order to request foreign countries to keep the statistics in the way the hon. Member desires. He says that there is a certain amount of sentiment in this matter. If an Irish trade mark were established it would be a case of sentiment taking a practical form, and it would give us a certain right to ask other countries to help us to do what we are so anxious to do for ourselves, to point out that it would be an easy matter for them, and that it would cause little trouble and no extra expense. I think it is a reasonable request. Everyone who has been in touch with trade in recent years knows that increasing value is attached to statistics. In every large modern business, more and more is spent in keeping the statistics of business; and what is applicable to a modern house of business is applicable also to Ireland. In these days so much depends on checking the progress of foreign business by accurate figures, which give a standard of comparsion between one year and another. You want a standard, and unless you have a standard you cannot have comparisons, and you cannot know accurately whether you are going backward or forward. I sympathise with the desire of the hon. Member. The movement for developing the national industries of Ireland is a recent one, and it will be of great interest to see from year to year where it is progressing, and where it is falling off; in order that where there is improvement fresh capital and energy may be thrown into the business, and where there is falling off, the reason may be discovered. The House as a whole I think ought to sympathise with any movement for industrial development in Ireland, because surely one of the most pathetic things in the relations between Great Britain and Ireland is the enormous growth of British trade as compared with the industrial development of Ireland. The least the House can do, if there is this movement, is to help and encourage it as far as possible. If these separate statistics can be obtained, I am sure they will be useful. I hope they will begin by making a record for Ireland, and that Ireland will use them to break the record as years go on. The request is most moderate and reasonable, and one with which the House ought to sympathise, and I will do my best to overcome any difficulties there may be.

MR. BOLAND said that in consequence of the fair way in which the right hon. Gentleman had met the request he would ask leave to withdraw the Amendment.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

*MR. REES (Montgomery Boroughs) said the hon. Member for South Kerry had suggested as a reason why Consuls could not sufficiently differentiate the figures relating to Ireland was that they had not time to deal with the matter in detail. He had seen a great many British Consuls in different parts of the Empire, but he never heard that anyone was unable to deal with statistics because he was overworked. He thought criticisms of these efficient and obliging officers should proceed upon other lines. There was one matter which affected not only the interests of Ireland but the whole of the British Empire in relation to the performance of the duties of Consuls. He understood from the right hon. Gentleman that a severe linguistic test was exacted from Consuls. That might be so, but it was in that respect that our Consuls most fell short of what the country might expect. Nor was that their fault. They worked in remote localities and very often those who were most proficient in this respect were not promoted to other places because they spoke so exceedingly well the language of the place where they then were. They were thus localised and became permanently associated with the country whose language they spoke so fluently. How few had a career before them like Sir William White, who rose to be the Ambassador in Turkey. By making such proficiency one of the chief grounds for preferment as much as in any other the right hon. Gentleman could improve the Consular Service. He knew how difficult it was to secure high efficiency by merely exacting a strict test in examination, for he had probably examined as many candidates in foreign languages as any Member of the House. The reason why Consuls had not set to work, as a matter of course, to acquire an intimate acquaintance with the language of the country in which they were stationed was that there was no promotion in linguistic efficiency, it was not the road to promotion in the Consular Service.

Mr. FELL (Great Yarmouth) said he noticed that some of the subsidiary German states had resident Ministers. He took it that this was a relic of former days when those states had diplomatic relations with the world. Now that we had a Minister at Berlin it seemed to him that our Consuls in the smaller states were sacrificed to the resident Ministers. In Bavaria there was a resident Minister with a high salary, while there was a Consul at Munich with a trifling salary. He could not apportion the duties between those gentlemen, but he imagined that the duties of the Consul at Munich would be more important than those of the resident Minister. There was another direction in which our Consular Service was behindhand. In the whole of Siberia from Moscow along the Siberian railway there was not a single British Consul. There was now a large and increasing business with that country, though there was no one to whom British manufacturers or business men could make inquiry. With a language so difficult as the Russian it was almost impossible for an ordinary English firm to make any inquiry in regard to business in that vast country with which in the future we would have great business relations. He hoped our business with that country would increase, but it would be greatly prejudiced if we had not some Consuls there.

Major SEELY (Liverpool, Abercromby) moved a reduction of the Vote by £200 in order to call attention to the Convention with China of May 13th, 1904. Under Article 2 of that Convention our Consuls were obliged to co-operate with the Taotai of the district in the recruiting of coolies for service in the British Empire, and under Article 3 they were obliged to assist in providing emigration bureaus. In fact our Consular service in China was used to advertise the advantages of coolie emigration. He thought the vast majority of the House highly disapproved of their being used for such a purpose. There was very much stronger reason for action in this matter than in connection with the Brussels Convention. Even greater commercial interests were involved. The Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies had warned the House that it was likely that this Convention would require amendment, and he thought that if it was necessary to abrogate it in view of changes of policy in regard to Chinese labour in South Africa a definite decision should be come to at an early date. He would not press the matter further that night. But his right hon. friend would forgive him when he said that there was an overwhelming impression that the members of the diplomatic and consular services had been used for the purpose of assisting the recruiting of coolies. He was sure that they would all be grateful to the right hon. Gentleman if they were informed what action the Government would take in regard to the matter.

The CHAIRMAN: Does the hon. and gallant Gentleman move the reduction of the vote by £200?

Major SEELY: I do.

Whereupon Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Item, Class 5, Vote 1 (Diplomatic and Consular Services), be reduced by £200."—(*Major Seely.*)

*Sir **EDWARD GREY** said he had not got a copy of the Convention of China with him. He did make some inquiry orginally as to whether the Convention with China had anything to do with the Labour Ordinance in the Transvaal, and as to whether if the Convention with China was abrogated it would have any effect on the recruiting of Chinese labour, and he had been told that even if the Convention were abrogated the recruiting would go on and would be carried out by recruiters who were not Consuls at all. The question whether these recruiters were the servants of the employers of Chinese labour had nothing to do with the Foreign Office. If it should turn out that such abrogation of the Convention was a necessary step in carrying out their policy there would be no doubt of its being taken by the Government at the earliest possible moment.

MR. W. REDMOND (Clare, E.) said that this question of the appointments to the Consular service was one in which he had taken a great interest, and he was sure that they had all listened with satisfaction to the promise made by the right hon. Gentleman the Foreign Secretary in answer to the statement put before the Committee by the hon. Member for South Kerry. Two years ago he had occasion to call attention to the whole system of appointments to the Consular service, and at that time he proved conclusively that it was wrong and on an unsound basis. He gave a list of the Consuls who had been appointed who had absolutely no qualification for the position either by commercial training or experience, and he was able to shew that a great number of them had been appointed simply as a reward for political services. What gave rise to the discussion two years ago was the disappearance from this House of a distinguished Member of the Tory Party —distinguished in many ways, but not in a commercial direction. That Gentleman had been appointed a Consul, as a reward for political services, but for a long time they could not discover where he was appointed to. He was sure that every hon. Member had listened with great satisfaction to the assurance that there was to be an entire change in the matter of these Consular appointments; and he would be greatly obliged if the right hon. Gentleman the Foreign Secretary would tell the Committee when exactly this change was to come into operation. As he understood the right hon. Gentleman, these appointments would be made henceforth with a special view to the qualifications of the gentleman and after examination; and that in future appointments would not be made from the outside, but from those who had had experience in the service. He trusted that in future no Members of this House would be appointed as Consuls because they had been good Party men and had always voted straight.

*SIR EDWARD GREY said he ought to have stated when speaking before that the new regulations to which he had alluded were Departmental regulations which had been sanctioned by Lord Lansdowne in May, 1904. With regard to pledges for the future, there remained a discretion in any exceptional case for making an exceptional appointment. He could not give an absolute pledge with regard to them; but when they were made the hon. Member and the whole House, would have opportunities, of which no one knew better how to take advantage, of calling attention to them.

MR. CLAUDE HAY said he wanted to know what was going to happen in regard to the case of Consuls, not British subjects, who had reached the limit of age involving a re-consideration of their appointment. He was aware of appointments being held at important centres of industry and ports in the kingdom of Italy by gentlemen who were not British subjects, or if they were, who did not possess qualifications for discharging the growing work in these particular Consulates. He asked the right hon. Gentleman the Foreign Secretary whether he had any scheme in his mind by which these gentlemen could be removed from their positions and Englishmen put into their places. These appointments should be given only to men who were able to perform their duties efficiently, and should not go on in a moribund condition as at present. There were two other items in the Vote to which he wished to refer. In the first place, hon Members who had been about the world must have met some fellow-countrymen abroad who were in distress, and yet he found that the only amount allocated for the relief of distressed British subjects abroad was the sum of £100! Some hon. Members were eloquent the other day in stating that they were quite ready to tax the people of this country for taking upon themselves the burden of foreign idiots, yet only £100 was given to relieve distressed British subjects abroad! There was an important item of £30,000 for special missions and services. He was not one who would say that any special or ornamental mission which it might be necessary for this country to send to any foreign potentate should not have adequate sums at their disposal to enable them to perform their duties; but why should this £30,000 be voted without a single syllable of explanation being made? That was surely very good evidence of the real intentions of the Government in regard to these funds. So long as they got the Vote through the House of Commons without a word of explanation they did not care. Perhaps the Foreign Secretary would give the Committee some details which would justify them in passing this Vote. They did not like to go to their constituents and say, "We do not know why this sum was voted or for what special services it was given." There was another item as to outfits. Did he understand rightly that the sum of £8,000 was for outfits for Ambassadors and Ministers on taking up their duties on new posts; or was the sum for outfits for any other purpose? Then there was an item "gratuities: £500." In the Chancelleries abroad there were men employed who were not only very faithful but ill paid. On them a great deal of responsibility rested because they had opportunities of gaining information which was in the possession of British Legations and Consulates. These men had no chance of pensions, as was the case in Germany, and by paying them so inadequately it was almost putting a premium on that form of discretion which very soon became treachery. The paltry sum of £500 given as gratuities to these men, was, in his judgment, a slur upon a most loyal class of servants of this country.

Mr. Claude Hay.

AN HON. MEMBER said he wished to ask the Foreign Secretary whether, in view of qualifications required in the Consular service, sufficient remuneration would be given to attract good men.

*SIR EDWARD GREY said that it would be impossible to have a general rise of remuneration in the Consular service without a considerable increase in Estimates. The Government were not this year proposing any considerable increase of expenditure on the Consular service. He thought it was undesirable in the interests of economy that proposals for a general increase of salaries involving a large addition to the Estimates should be made, provided it was found that the service could be efficiently conducted at the present rates. As to Consuls abroad who are not British subjects, he could say nothing about individual cases until he knew what they were; but he thought it would be most wrong to undertake, in answer to the hon. Gentleman opposite, to get rid of men who had been legitimately appointed to the public service, very likely by the recent Government.

MR. CLAUDE HAY said he had referred to men who had reached the age limit.

*SIR E. GREY said that probably these men had also been appointed by the Conservative Government.

MR. CLAUDE HAY said he was not referring to any question of Party politics, but to appointments made during the last twenty years.

*SIR E. GREY said he did not wish to say that these were wrong appointments. He did not know to what cases the hon. Gentleman referred. But even supposing a man was a subject of another country, if he had been once properly appointed by a British Government to his post, he ought not to be dismissed except on the ground that he had not performed his duties properly. With regard to future appointments, that was another matter as to which the Government had a free hand. With regard to the details of the items for special missions, he had not gone through the Estimates as a whole before this evening, because he understood that they would not be taken up as a whole, but only on one or two special subjects. If the hon. Gentleman would ask him as to these matters of detail. either by way of Question or when the Vote was taken as a whole, he would do his best to give him the information he desired.

MAJOR SEELY said he might be permitted to explain that he had raised this important question of diplomatic assistance for recruiting coolies in China under the impression that his right hon. friend had had due notice of it. He understood that the Government did not propose to continue the system, and if that were the case he would not persevere with his Amendment.

*SIR E. GREY remarked that all he could say was that he was not conscious of the Foreign Office having done anything in the matter at all. At any rate he had seen no sign of it. But whatever they did, either actively or passively, it must be done in consultation with the Colonial Office. All he could say was that he wanted to see the whole thing got rid of.

MAJOR SEELY asked leave to withdraw his Amendment.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

Original Question again proposed.

*MR. MORTON (Sutherlandshire) said he wished to call attention to a matter in connection with the Colonial Office and South Africa. On Thursday last he gave notice of a Question as to the treatment of General Botha in regard to the compensation offered him for the burning of his house during the late war. He got an Answer eventually to that Question in writing, but it was very unsatisfactory, and that was his reason for calling attention to the matter now. It appeared that during the late war the property of General Botha on the Natal border was burned down, like that of nearly all the Boer generals. Now, it was understood that it was with a view to get rid of the results of these "methods of barbarism" that £3,000,000 were set aside to pay such claims as that of General Botha. The claim sent in by General Botha amounted to £15,000. This was reduced on the Government assessment to £7,000, and then he was offered a cheque for £800, which was endorsed with the legend "Receipt in full." General Botha refused to take £800, and he was now waiting to get something like justice from the British Government. He (Mr. Morton) had been told by the Secretary of State that he had not yet received the information he required upon this point, but he thought that he ought to have received it by this time. This was a matter of honour to the British Government, for they had promised to make good, so far as they could one of those "methods of barbarism" by settling these claims in some fair and honourable way. The Secretary of State said he did not understand that General Botha's claim had been treated differently from the claims of others who were entitled to share the £3,000,000 provided for ex-burghers. It appeared that a large number of other claims had been treated in the same way. He had been told that no action was proposed. The Government was bound to carry out the solemn promises of their predecessors. A promise was given that these claims should be made good, and was he to understand that the Government now coolly proposed to ignore this claim of General Botha? He was rather astonished that there was no one on the Treasury Bench that knew anything about this matter to give him an Answer. He gave notice early to-day, and somebody ought to have been present to answer his Question.

Right hon. Gentlemen were put in office by them, and they were paid by them, and they must understand plainly that when Questions were put to them, they should be there to answer them. On a Question like this there ought to be very strong grounds indeed for refusing to make good the claims to which he had referred. He begged to move that the salary of the Secretary of State for the Colonies be reduced by £100.

*THE CHAIRMAN: I would remind the hon. Member that this is a Vote on Account, and that his Motion will only be in order if he moves to reduce the amount asked for the Colonial Office by £100.

*MR. MORTON: Then I will move to reduce the Colonial Office Vote by £100.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Item, Class 2, Vote 6 (Colonial Office), be reduced by £100."—(*Mr. Morton.*)

*MR. J. WARD (Stoke-on-Trent) said there was one question he should like to ask, which the remarks of the hon. Member for Sutherland had brought to his mind. If an answer was going to be given he should like to know whether the proportion of all the claims that had been paid in the Transvaal for damage during the war worked out at the same rate as in this particular claim? He understood that they had only paid £800 for over £15,000 damages. ["No, no."]

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. ASQUITH, Fifeshire, E.): The Under-Secretary for the Colonies is indisposed and not able to be here. [Cries of "He was in the House of Lords."] I hope my hon. friend will postpone this Question until the Report stage of the Vote.

*MR. MORTON said he was quite willing to postpone the Question to the Report stage, on the understanding that he had an undertaking from the Government that he would have an opportunity for bringing the Question up again. He asked leave to withdraw his Motion.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

Original Question again proposed.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: If you go on like that you will soon be in the Government yourself.

*MR. CHARLES HOBHOUSE (Bristol, E.) said he desired to call attention to an item which appeared year after year, and which he did not remember had ever before been discussed since he had been a Member of this House. The item he alluded to was £20,000 for the Department of Woods and Forests. It seemed to him that this was a most important item and there was a great deal more involved than appeared at first sight, both as to the method of administration of the office and the sum received and paid into the Treasury. The Crown property was in the hands of two Commissioners. The total revenue of the Woods and Forests Commissioners was £620,000, of which there was only an actual expenditure of £150,000, leaving a payment into the Treasury of nearly half a million of money. So far as the Treasury was concerned the result might be considered eminently satisfactory, but the management of this propety was exceedingly costly, very unsatisfactory, and ought to be changed. There had been spent, for administering this office in London, £10,000, in Dublin £15,000, £3,000 in law expenses, £7,000 for surveyors' charges, £4,000 upon the administration of mines, making with repairs and other outgoings a total of £154,000. No less than £37,000 had been spent in administration pure and simple. That was far too great a proportion of expenses for administration for this Committee to sanction. There was much unnecessary sale and resale and purchase of property between the various Government departments. On page 107 of the Report there was a sale to the Commissioner of Works of £245,000 worth of property, and a repurchase from the same Commissioner of £150,000 worth of property which involved a totally unnecessary expenditure upon law, conveyancing, surveyors' charges, and other numerous expenses connected with the transference of property. It was an absolutely unnecessary exchange of property, incurred and undertaken for no ostensible reason. It was a surrender of houses in one street in order to acquire property in an adjoining street. Then, there was the extraordinary acquisition of scattered properties all over the United Kingdom which were costly to purchase and to manage. The acquisition of scattered estates had been abandoned by private individuals, and it was time that it should be abandoned by the State. There was an unfortunate concentration of holdings. There were twenty-eight new leases this year dealing with 6,822 acres of land, giving an average of about 250 acres. What they ought to create was not large farms but small holdings. The policy of the Commissioners in the past had been, not to supply small holdings but to concentrate small holdings in large ones, without giving the people of this country an opportunity to get hold of Crown lands in small parcels. There were no less than 5,000 acres of Crown property unlet, and he ventured to assert this would not be the case if the land was offered in small holdings. He suggested that the property under the Department, extending to 120,000 acres, and including not only lands, but mines and quarries, ought to be cut up into separate departments, one dealing with mines and minerals, another with agricultural property, and a third with woods and forests. Then there ought to be a systematic splitting up of great holdings into small holdings, and the whole income ought to be handed over to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, applied to the Sinking Fund, and capitalised for the benefit of the State. He moved the reduction of the Vote by £100.

Motion made and Question proposed, "That Item, Class 2, Vote 24, (Woods and Forests, etc., Office of), be reduced by £100."—(*Mr. Charles Hobhouse.*)

MR. WINFREY (Norfolk, S.W.) hoped the Secretary to the Treasury would be able to give the Committee some information as to the disgraceful way in which the agricultural part of this office had been administered. It fell to him, as Chairman of the Lincolnshire Small Holdings Association, to apply for one of the Crown farms, and they were told that it would be detrimental to the estate to allow them to have the farm for small holdings, notwithstanding that the association had been running fifteen years and was perfectly sound financially, and that they undertook to take the farm at the same rent as the preceding tenant. Instead of being let to them, it was let to a farmer who had already one Crown farm which he was farming very badly. If the agricultural portion of the estate could be put under the management of the Board of Agriculture, they would, he thought, have a better state of things prevailing. The Crown had some very fine land in Lincolnshire and in parts of Cambridgeshire, and it ought be made useful for hundreds of small holding tenants. At present, however, the policy of the Woods and Forests Department, when a farm was to be let, was to let it to a large farmer who already had perhaps one or two farms in his occupation. That was detrimental to the best interests of the country, and he ventured to hope that they would have some satisfactory answer from those in authority as to the better control of Crown land.

MR. McKENNA (Monmouthshire, N.) said he did not complain of the criticisms of his hon. friend, although he thought the word "disgraceful" was a little too strong under the circumstances, nor did he complain that he had not received notice of this Question. As however, he had not received any notice that the Question was going to be brought up, he hoped his hon. frend the Member for East Bristol would not complain if his Answer was not as full and complete as it might otherwise have been. The hon. Member had argued in favour of a system of small holdings being adopted upon Crown lands. He reminded his hon. friend the Member for East Bristol that the subject he had raised was to form a part of the inquiry by the Royal Commission on the Afforestation of Crown Lands and Coast Erosion. He had no doubt the recommendations of the Commission would be made in the sense his hon. friend wished. He would see what could be done to prevent any unnecessary overlapping in regard to the duties of the Department. He took exception to the epithet "disgraceful" used by the hon. Member for Norfolk, but must leave his predecessor in that office to speak for the management for which he had been responsible. The hon. Member went on to advise that agricultural land under the control of the Woods and Forests Department, the mines and minerals and the woods and forests should be placed under different Departments. If he meant entirely separate Departments for these particular branches, he could not agree with his hon. friend, because that would add enormously to the cost of administration. If, however, he simply meant that any one of these Departments should have separate officials for those particular branches, he agreed with him, and he might say that that was already being done to a certain extent. At the present time the mines and minerals Department was quite separate. He did not wish to attack his predecessor, and he was not aware what defence he would have to make, but he would leave him to reply to the Question which had been raised by the hon. Member for South West Norfolk.

MR. VICTOR CAVENDISH (Derbyshire, W.) said that he was not aware that this debate was coming on, otherwise he should have made himself more fully informed upon this subject. He ventured to say that the accusations which had been made against the administration of the Woods and Forests Department were totally unjustifiable. He was sure that the administration of that Department had been well carried out. He knew that there were changes of policy recommended by hon. Members opposite; and they might possibly consider that the whole system of farming was open to very grave objection. They might also hold the opinion that land under small holdings was capable fo producing a great deal more than it was doing to-day. That, however, was a question which did not arise on this Vote, but it came under the administration of the Woods and Forests and under the management of the Commissioners to whom reference had been made. He did not think that if an investigation was made they would have the slightest reason to complain of the way in which the property had been managed. During the whole of the time that he was responsible for the administration of the Woods and Forests, they were always prepared to listen to any suggestions which might be made. Although he did not know the facts of the case raised by the hon. Member for South-West Norfolk, he thought that when the matter had been further investigated they would find no reason to complain.

*MR. MORTON said he called attention to this matter eleven years ago, and it was then in a state of muddle. They had been given all sorts of promises, but the Department seemed to be in a worse state than ever. It was a curious thing that the big landowners did not like small holdings, because they did not consider that the tenants were respectable as they did not wear dress suits or cocked hats. Bearing in mind what happened at the last election he thought they should have a different state of things in the future.

MR. CHARLES HOBHOUSE asked leave to withdraw his Amendment. His object had been satisfied by the attention of the Government having been directed to this subject. He regretted that he had been unable to give his hon. friend notice, but the time was so short, and he did not know that he would have been able to bring it on so early. He wished to point out that he had brought no charge against the two gentlemen who managed this property.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Original Question again proposed.

MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty) moved to reduce the item relating to the Scottish Office by £100 in order to call attention to the state of affairs in the Western Islands of Scotland. He complained that the money devoted to the Congested Districts Board of Scotland for specific purposes had been squandered in a most shameful manner. He appealed to the Secretary for Scotland to look into this matter and see if he could not bring about some reform in the Board. Matters were going from bad to worse, and the whole subject required to be overhauled. The Board was not a paid one, and they would never get the work well done unless men were paid for it. The man who was chiefly responsible for the work was a clerk in the Exchequer Office, who engaged another man at about £200 a year. That was not the way to conduct the business of a Department such as this. This matter was a burning one in the district. The right hon. Gentleman the Secretary for Scotland smiled, but it was not a smiling matter. What was the right hon. Gentleman going to do in regard to the island of Lewis? A report was published a short time ago by the medical inspector of the Local Government Board for Scotland showing a state of affairs in the island not to be found in any other part of the British Empire. The medical officer had described it as a disgrace to our civilisation. The Public Health Act for Scotland did not touch it. What was going to be done? The local authority was powerless; they said they could not go on without money. Had the Government considered the desirability of taking over the public health of the island? The local authority had failed and would continue to fail. Some years ago the Education Department took over the schools in the island of Lewis because there was a deadlock. Things were now at a deadlock with regard to public health in that insanitary island. He had travelled in many lands, but he had never seen anything so bad as that which existed in the island of Lewis. He wished to complain of the insanitary condition of many of the schools. There was a long list of schools which had been closed for months in consequence of fevers and other infectious diseases. Highlanders had made some of the finest men in the British Army and they had volunteered in their hundreds and thousands to serve in the South African war. Were their children to be sent to schools which were badly ventilated and had no water supply? He had in his time asked a fair number of Questions in this House in the hope of getting some satisfaction out of the Government or the Scottish Office. He had visited the Scottish Office and seen the Permanent Under-Secretary; they all knew he was a Tory of the Tories. He did not get any satisfaction. He was not at all surprised that hon. Gentlemen were driven to ask Questions in this House, and he should be driven to ask them again. The small number he had asked in the past would be nothing to what he should ask in the future. He also had to complain of the action of the Inspector of Schools in the Island of Lewis in encouraging the School Board to set at defiance a circular issued in 1894 when Sir George Trevelyan was Secretary for Scotland. He begged to move.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Item, Class 2, Vote 27 (Secretary for Scotland, Office of), be reduced by £100."—(*Mr. Weir.*)

*Mr. JOHN DEWAR (Inverness) desired to emphasise the seriousness of the condition of the Western Islands, where a state of affairs existed which was not to be found in any other part of the United Kingdom. He would give one or two facts to prove the poverty and congestion which existed in the Western Hebrides. Rating was a very good test of the prosperity of a district. The combined rates in many of the parishes were as much as 13s., 15s., and 17s. in the £, and in one parish they were positively 20s. 8d. One of the proprietors in those islands told him that five years ago he paid £5,400 in rates, and this year, £7,500. Twenty years ago his rents came to £20,000, but this year they were £12,000, and there was no reason why, in a couple of years, his rates should not be as much as, or more than, his rent. This could not continue, and he joined with his hon. friend in saying that the Government had not done what it ought to remedy this state of affairs. In one of the parishes—that in which the rates were 20s. 8d. in the £—the ratepayers had refused to pay the rates, the parish council had resigned, and the bank had refused to advance money to help keep the paupers, and the Government had stepped in with a temporary loan of £200. That would keep them for a few months, but it was not a satisfactory or permanent solution of the question. Many circumstances no doubt had tended to produce the present state of affairs, but he was convinced that it was the landless condition of the people which was in the first place responsible. Ninety per cent. of the paupers came from the landless portion of the community and only 10 per cent. from the crofter class. Those people had agitated for twenty years to get access to the land. They did not want it for nothing. They were prepared to pay a fair rent for the land they wanted to till. The Crofters' Act was passed for them and the Congested Districts Board created for them, and yet after twenty years agitation to get access to the land it was still refused to them. This was not the case of a bad landlord. The land belonged to a most benevolent proprietrix, who was anxious to do what she could for the people, and had already done a great deal, but it was a case of pure mismanagement. Were they to crush out this land hunger, or were they to try to satisfy it? He welcomed the sensible decision given by the Lord Advocate that it was no case of breach of the law but one of trespass and of civil action. The people were only anxious to become small holders.

THE CHAIRMAN said he thought the hon. Member was discussing a matter which would properly arise on a subsequent occasion.

*MR. JOHN DEWAR said the Vote under discussion was for the Secretary for Scotland, who was Chairman of the Congested Districts Board, and it was of the failure of that Board to deal with this state of things that he was complaining. Were they to see a gunboat and a force of Glasgow policemen sent positively to prevent these people who were able to cultivate the land from becoming small holders? He welcomed what the Lord Advocate had now done. With regard to the Crofters' Commission he hoped it had not outlived its usefulness.

THE CHAIRMAN said that subject was clearly out of order.

*MR. JOHN DEWAR said he merely wanted to suggest that the work of the Congested Districts Board and the Crofters' Commission ought to be combined. He desired to draw attention to the present condition of excitement—and he thought justifiable excitement—in the Western Islands, which had led to this agitation and discontent.

MR. AINSWORTH (Argyllshire) confirmed what had fallen from the lips of his hon. friends, and said he was most anxious to see more energetic action on behalf of the Government.

*MR. MORTON desired to support as strongly as he could the hon. Member for Ross and Cromarty and other hon. Members who had spoken. What they wanted the Government to do was to give up the traditions of the old Tory officials under them, and do something for themselves, and then probably there would be a better state of affairs than existed now. The offices were at the present time full of Tory officials, who bossed the Secretary for Scotland, or anybody else who was about, and therefore they got exactly the same answers to letters that they got from the late Tory Government, written evidently by the same office boy, and containing exactly the same words. He wished to urge upon the Government that something must be done for the people in the Highland counties.

*THE SECRETARY FOR SCOTLAND (Mr. SINCLAIR, Forfarshire) said that on behalf of the Government he welcomed the short debate which had arisen in regard to the Western Islands, but before saying a word on the merits of the question he must suggest to his hon. friend that the political chiefs of the Department were responsible for its policy, and it was not right to bring into debate in this House, as he understood it, civil servants and officials who were not there to answer for themselves, and who had to act under the political heads of their departments, upon whom the responsibility for the policy rested. It was only fair that that should be said of the criticisms upon civil servants that had been passed in this debate. He was exceedingly grateful to the hon. Members who had raised the debate, because it was unquestionably the fact that a very serious condition of affairs existed in the Western Islands. This House had not been able in past years—and it became increasingly difficult—to pay attention to questions which did not excite the interest of a large number of Members, and for this and other reasons these questions had suffered in past times. He was especially grateful, therefore, that the attention of the House should have been drawn, as it had been this evening, to the very serious condition of affairs that existed in Lewis, South Uist, Barra, and other parts of the Western Islands. It was quite true that the local rates were alarmingly high, and it was a serious problem as to how local government could be carried on. Altogether the social conditions were very difficult to deal with. There was no time to-night to enter exhaustively into a consideration of the matter, and it would be hardly possible for a Government that had come into office so recently to have formed any matured new policy to lay before the House; but he could assure the hon. Gentlemen who had spoken that there was just as keen a desire to deal with the subject on the Treasury Bench as there was in any other quarter, and the Government would welcome help in every way towards a settlement of the question. They would be glad of any information as to facts and in every way they would be glad, so far as was in their power, to co-operate with hon. Members representing the districts concerned. When the time came—and he hoped it might come before very long this session—for an opportunity of discussing this question they would be able to get further in their consideration.

MR. WEIR said that after the declaration of the right hon. Gentleman, he begged leave to withdraw his Amendment.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Original Question put, and agreed to.

And, it being Midnight, the Chairman left the Chair to make his Report to the House.

Resolution to be reported this day. Committee to sit again to-morrow.

BUTTER TRADE.

Ordered, That a Select Committee be appointed to consider whether any and, if so, what further legislation is required in order to secure the better conduct and control of the Trade in Butter and Butter Substitutes.—(*Sir Edward Strachey.*)

Adjourned at five minutes after
Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Tuesday, 6*th March*, 1906.

Several Lords Took the Oath.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

The LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House, That the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the Certificates from the Examiners that the further Standing Orders applicable to the following Bills have been complied with: Great Yarmouth Waterworks and Lowestoft Water and Gas [H.L.]. Southport and Lytham Tramroad (Extension of Time) [H.L.]. Norwich Union Life Insurance Society [H.L.].

The same were ordered to lie on the Table.

Kent Collieries Electricity Supply Bill [H.L.]. The Chairman of Committees informed the House that the Promoters do not intend to proceed further with the Bill. Ordered that the Bill be not further proceeded with.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

LICENSING ACT, 1904.

Treasury Minute, dated 28th February, 1906, directing that the "Compensation Fund (Licensing Act, 1904) Account" shall be audited by the Comptroller and Auditor General.

PRIVATE PROCEDURE (SCOTLAND) ACT, 1899.

Report by the Chairman of Committees of the House of Lords and the Chairman of Ways and Means in the House of Commons, under Section 2 of the Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899.

That the provisions of the Edinburgh Corporation Order, the Highland and Great North of Scotland Railways Amalgamation Order, and of the Scottish Union and National Insurance Company Order, are of such a character that they ought to be dealt with by Private Bills and not by Provisional Orders.

That the Glasgow and South Western Railway Order may be allowed to proceed as an Order with the omission of Clause 14, which appears to contravene General Order No. 114.

That, save as aforesaid, the Provisional Orders be allowed to proceed subject to such recommendations as may be hereafter made with respect to the several Orders.

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table.

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

MARINE INSURANCE BILL (H.L.).

House in Committee (according to Order).

Clauses 1 to 15 agreed to.

Clause 16.

EARL RUSSELL said this was the clause to which he had called the attention of the noble and learned Lord in charge of the Bill on the Second Reading. He did not profess completely to understand the meaning of the clause. The section which he proposed to amend provided that—

> "The insurable value, in the case of a steamship, includes also the machinery, boilers, and coals and engine stores if owned by the assured, and, in the case of a ship engaged in a special trade, the ordinary fittings requisite for that trade."

This provision seemed to exclude the case of a ship propelled by mechanical means other than steam, and he therefore begged to move the Amendment standing in his name, which would cover that point.

Amendment moved—

> "In Clause 16 (1), line 30, after the words 'engine stores if owned by the assured,' to insert the words 'and in the case of a ship propelled by mechanical means other than steam includes also the machinery, fuel, fuel-tanks, and engine stores if owned by the assured.'"—(*Earl Russell.*)

THE EARL OF HALSBURY: I am afraid I cannot accept the Amendment. The noble and learned Lord is under a misapprehension. All that is done by the section to which he refers is that, in the case of steam vessels, certain known appliances are included in the assurance of the vessel. If there are vessels having other appliances, there is not the least difficulty in those persons who want to insure them inserting such a clause in the policy; but without knowing what the vessels are, their number and equipment, and what there is properly belonging to them when they are propelled by other means than steam, I should hesitate very much to put in the words proposed. For instance, in the case of electricity, for aught I know to the contrary it might include electric batteries and so forth. The section as it stands does not exclude anything. It merely says that a particular term in a policy of insurance—namely, a steam vessel—shall include so and so.

LORD MONTAGU OF BEAULIEU said that at the present moment a very large number of ships were being fitted in this country and in Germany by what was called gas suction plant, which operated without any steam at all. It would surely be advisable, in passing a Bill of this importance, to make provision for this new kind of locomotion, which, he ventured to think, would in a few years become extremely popular. He would like to be assured that ships propelled by this means would not be excluded.

THE EARL OF HALSBURY: Let me read the initial words of the clause—

> "Subject to any express provision or valuation in the policy, the insurable value of the subject-matter insured must be ascertained as follows."

Then follows a particular form of ascertaining the value, including certain particulars where it is a steam vessel; but nothing is excluded. You can put anything you like in your policy. I hesitate to use any general words about some particular class of vessels of which I know nothing.

EARL RUSSELL said he was perfectly willing to accept the assurance of the noble and learned Lord that the case to which he had called attention was covered by the Bill, and he withdrew his Amendment.

Amendment, by leave of the House, withdrawn.

Clause 16 agreed to.

Remaining clauses agreed to, and Bill reported, without Amendment, to the House.

THE EARL OF HALSBURY: This Bill has already passed your Lordships' House and been very carefully considered. It seems to me that it would be giving unnecessary trouble to noble Lords to bring them here for the Standing Committee, and therefore I propose, if your Lordships think right, to negative the Standing Committee.

Moved, "That the Standing Committee be negatived."—(*The Earl of Halsbury.*)

On Question, Motion agreed to. Bill to be read 3ª on Thursday next.

PREVENTION OF CORRUPTION BILL.

House in Committee (according to Order).

THE LORD CHANCELLOR (Lord LOREBURN): My Lords, I had intended suggesting certain Amendments, which, as I said on the Second Reading, would not be of an important character. But I think it very desirable that this House should proceed as rapidly as possible, so that the Bill may have a better chance of passing into law, and I will refrain from moving Amendments, at all events at this stage. I do not think the Amendments which I shall propose will at all alarm the noble and learned Lord, or meet with opposition from him.

Bill reported, without Amendment, to the House.

THE EARL OF HALSBURY: The same observations apply to this Bill, which has passed through the Standing Committee before. I think your Lordships will agree that it would only give a certain number of noble Lords the inconvenience of coming here to do nothing if it went to the Standing Committee. I therefore move that that stage be negatived.

Moved, "That the Standing Committee be negatived."—(*The Earl of Halsbury.*)

On Question, Motion agreed to. Bill to be read 3ª on Thursday next.

ADMIRALTY POLICY.

LORD BRASSEY rose to call attention to the statement on Admiralty policy recently presented. The noble Lord said: My Lords, the Memorandum presented to Parliament by the late Board of Admiralty, to which I desire to call attention, deals with changes, which may be justly described as reforms, undertaken during the past three years. The responsibility and the merit are shared by Lord Selborne and by Lord Cawdor, whom we are glad to see in his place, restored to health. The merit, if not the responsibility, is shared, as Ministers would be the first to acknowledge, by their naval advisers.

On the leading features of recent Admiralty policy I have no unfriendly criticisms. It should be the aim of every Naval Administration to maintain the fleet at a sufficient strength, with the least addition to the public charge. The liberal supplies voted by Parliament have been effectively applied. In resources for the manning of the Navy, in battleships and in cruisers, we are far above the two-Power standard. The fleet has been redistributed. The squadrons on distant stations have been reduced. The squadrons in home and European waters have been strengthened. We are powerful where power is needed—near the centre of affairs. Mobilisation has been perfected. Every effective ship is ready for any service. The exercises of the Fleet have been carried out on a scale without precedent. Gunnery, under Sir Percy Scott and Captain Jellicoe, is greatly improved. And the Estimates have been cut down in the last two years by £5,000,000. Economies have been made where they had been long called for.

In the manning of the Navy we have a wise change of policy. We had been adding 5,000 men annually to the naval force. In ten years the Manning Votes had been increased by more than £3,000,000. That increase has now ceased. In the last three years there has been some reduction. It may be carried further. A Return presented in August last gave a total exceeding 41,000 men in shore establishments and ships in reserve at home. It is not well to keep large numbers away from sea service. Our permanent men should be sufficient in number for ratings which need special training. We may fill up from Reserves. I will take a later opportunity of dealing with the Reserves of the Navy. In the Ship-building Votes large economies have been effected by putting aside ships of obsolete type, yet costly to maintain.

Are the Estimates, as reduced, sufficient to maintain our naval supremacy in the future? We have the assurance of the Admiralty that full provision has been made for the fighting efficiency of the Fleet and its instant readiness for war. In the number of ships building we are below the two-Power standard. The deficiency in numbers is made good by greater rapidity of construction. We build more cheaply than is possible in foreign countries. With an appropriation of something under £10,000,000 for shipbuilding for the British Navy, and limiting the comparison to European Powers, we are well above the two-Power standard in building.

I turn to branches of administration in which it seems possible to submit suggestions for the consideration of the Admiralty. Under an able Administration such suggestions must be few. There must always be something which occurs, whether rightly or wrongly, to the looker-on. I will deal first with the important changes lately made in the education of naval officers. The statement issued by the Admiralty deals fully with the new system of entry and training. The time has evidently come when engineer officers should no longer constitute a separate branch, and all naval officers should be instructed in the management of machinery. As an initial step, all candidates for commissions, executive, engineering, and marine, enter under the new scheme through the same channel. They are educated at the same schools, and are taught the same subjects.

The course of instruction has been revised. To the regret of all lovers of sailing, the seamanship of former days has become a lost art. A knowledge of the management and upkeep of machinery has become essential as well for the executive officer as for the engineer. It has been necessary to extend technical and professional training to the exclusion of other subjects. The classics are not included in the naval curriculum. In English literature, history, geography, and French, more instruction is given to cadets than to boys of the same age in the public schools. Every scheme of education must be a compromise, and fall short of an ideal standard. It would be desirable to give more instruction in modern languages at Dartmouth. It would be desirable, but it is impossible. The cadets work hard, and nothing which is now taught can be given up. That knowledge of languages which is of such great practical use in the Navy must be obtained later. The knowledge of languages should be more general. We have more than 5,000 officers in the Navy above warrant rank, but only 60 have qualified as interpreters in French. Officers should be encouraged to qualify as interpreters by more liberal rates of pay. I venture to suggest that in the examination of lieutenants more marks should be given for modern languages.

On naval education generally, the report of the Committee on the Higher Education of Naval Officers may still be consulted with advantage. The President, Sir Charles Shadwell, was distinguished for his scientific attainments. Comparing the system pursued in the British Navy with those prevailing in foreign services, the Committee specially insist on the difference in the age of entry—fourteen to eighteen years in foreign navies, and under thirteen in the British Navy. The Committee held that the foreign cadets, with a more extended school training, had advantages in mental training and must be better qualified to enter on more advanced studies, and to improve their general and special education.

Lord Brassey.

What would the Committee have said if they had had the opportunity of walking through the engineering shops at Dartmouth, and seeing the cadets at their work? They might, perhaps, have said that, as a method of engaging all the faculties upon the work in hand, and cultivating habits of accuracy, the new mechanical training could hardly be surpassed. No mechanical training, however, can supply the qualifications required in the higher ranks of the service, and these should certainly be kept in view in any scheme of naval education. It should be possible to extend the period of education while holding to our traditions as to early service at sea. It is proposed, as I understand, that cadets, on leaving Dartmouth, shall go to sea, for the first six months, in ships commissioned and organised for special service as training ships. Extend the term from six to twelve months. In the longer period much may be done under good instructors to complete general education.

Looking to all the demands which must come upon a naval officer as he advances to the highest ranks in the service, adequate preparation is not possible in early youth. In their observations on the early age of entry in the British service, the Committee on Education insisted on the paramount importance of making provison for professional improvement in after years. Under existing regulations, ample provision is made on the professional side. The Admiralty should do more to encourage the study of modern languages. For the general qualifications we must trust largely to self-teaching. Its results have been wonderful in the Navy. Nor is the naval the only profession in which the best men have acquired by self-teaching the highest qualifications they possess.

The Admiralty Minute deals at length with the future career of cadets. A certain interchange of duties as between the executive and the mechanical branches is proposed. It is not universally approved. It seems premature to discuss matters with which the Board of Admiralty of the future will have to deal, and will be fully competent to deal. At an early stage the naval officer will see for himself the line in which he can best succeed, and remain in it. Engineering duties will be attractive to officers with a mechanical turn. There should be advantages in pay and good prospects of promotion. Many appointments may be reserved for the engineer officers at the dockyards and at the Admiralty. It is well to raise the standard of the engineering branch to a level with that of the executive officers. In the senior ranks interchange of duties can hardly be possible.

The Admiralty statement deals with the obsolescence of warships—a fatal subject for naval administrators. The shipbuilding of the Navy is a problem of exceeding difficulty. We have proof in the fact that 150 ships, costly and of recent date, have been put aside as obsolete. It may be that too many have been put aside. Let us hope that the ships we are building to-day will remain longer on the list. All belong to types which every naval administration approves. Programmes of construction for the British Navy have never been fixed upon abstract principles. We have looked to the construction in hand for other Powers, and we have tried to go one better. In dimensions, in armament, in armour, in speed, in coal endurance, the "Dreadnought" has no rival afloat. There are criticisms on the "Dreadnought," those relating to the removal of the secondary armament being perhaps the most serious. Leaving technical questions to experts in Parliament, it is an agreeable duty to give the acknowledgments which are due, for the design, to Sir Philip Watts and his assistants, and to the officers and workmen at Portsmouth Dockyard for the performance of a memorable feat in completing such a vessel for launching in four months from the date of laying down. The shipbuilding officers in the Royal Yards may claim a further merit. The ships they build compare favourably in point of cost with contract-built vessels. That is a result not attained in other countries.

The occasion seems fitting for calling attention to the position of the chief professional officers of the dockyards. I may, perhaps, claim a hearing as Chairman of the Departmental Committee on whose Report, made in 1883, the constructors were organised as a Royal corps. The scheme submitted to our Committee had been drawn up by the late Sir Houston Stewart and Sir William White. It gave to the professional officers a more defined position in the service, with suitable gradations of rank. The additions to pay were slender. Salaries should be more liberal in a position so responsible as that of the manager of a dockyard, charged, as at Portsmouth, with the building of the "Dreadnought," and the direction of the labours of many thousands of men. The technical assistants to the Admiral Superintendents—an office lately abolished—with no direct responsibility, received £1,000 a year. It would be no unreasonable reward to raise the salary of the manager of the three principal yards, by increments, to a level with that of Superintendent of Construction Accounts at the Admiralty. Prizes should be offered to the corps of constructors. The resistance of the Treasury in these matters is not always for the public advantage.

Returning to shipbuilding policy, it is necessary to provide vessels for scouting duties. Eight ships have lately been completed, especially designed to act as scouts. They cost some £300,000 each. Their high speed is their only merit. Too restricted in dimensions, they are neither cruisers nor combatants. For scouting within close range, destroyers are available, and they combine fighting qualities with ability for gath ring information. For a wider range, let us look to the ocean-greyhounds of the mercantile marine. They were strongly recommended by Lord Charles Beresford to the Committee on Steamship subsidies. No ships, he said, could do their work better than the ocean-greyhounds built for speed in any weather. Mercantile scouts were used largely by the United States Navy in the war with Spain, and did good service. In France opinion grows in favour of building only battleships for the Navy, the scouts of the Fleet being drawn from the subsidised mail-services. With the double purpose of expanding their trade and creating a reserve of merchant-cruisers, all the maritime Powers are liberal in steamship subsidies. The wisdom of such a policy for ourselves was admitted when the agreement was entered into with the Cunard Company. It does not appear necessary to have insisted on a speed of twenty-five knots. Nor, on the other hand, should vessels be accepted of the class included in the Return moved for by Lord Spencer. Of thirty-eight vessels, five only had a speed of twenty knots and over. Speed of twenty-one to twenty-two knots should be ample at the present time. Lord Charles Beresford asked for ships having what he called the speed of the day.

In urging a policy of subsidies, political considerations should not be put out of view. We desire to strengthen the unity of the Empire. We cannot better promote that great object than by accelerating transportation for mails, emigrants, and merchandise. There is a further argument in support of the policy I am endeavouring to recommend. We can build ships for peaceful service without creating that rivalry in preparations for war which every statesman would wish to avoid. The last of the old contracts shortly expires. The opportunity is favourable for a new departure in the policy of the Admiralty in relation to mercantile auxiliaries.

The ever-growing expenditure on works has at last received a check. The Admiralty announce a saving on former estimates of £5,000,000 sterling. Has the last word been said in regard to reductions on works? The naval force at the Cape has been lately reduced to four crusiers, of which the flag-ship only is of the first class. Is the commitment to an expenditure of £4,000,000 in Simon's Bay irrevocable? Is it too late to cut down the present scheme? We are bound to maintain our base at Cape Town, where alone the mercantile marine can coal and repair, and where all trade is centred. It is not policy to duplicate establishments in close proximity—within a morning's ride on a Cape pony—and both of which must be adequately defended. We have to look, not only to the cost of works, but also to the cost of maintaining large bodies of skilled workmen at Colonial rates of pay. Graving-docks are useless without artificers and labourers. Is it proposed to maintain a dockyard establishment at Simon's Bay on a scale commensurate with the new works? Could continuous employment be found? The scheme was authorised during the pressure caused by the war. No European Power is in a position to despatch a powerful fleet to the South Atlantic.

The proposals now under consideration in Canada and Australia for the creation of naval forces for local defence give promise of far-reaching results in the future. It is vain to look for contributions to the Imperial Exchequer. That opinion, as I know, was strongly held by Sir Cyprian Bridge, when Commander-in-Chief on the Australian Station. The taxation necessary for such a purpose would be unpopular in the Colonies. Contributions have been given grudgingly in Australia; we have received none from Canada. The true policy is to encourage the Colonial Governments to organise naval forces for local defence. With or without express agreement, the Colonial forces are certain to aid in the defence of the Empire in any emergency. I fully subscribe to the observations recently made in this sense by my noble friend the First Lord of the Admiralty.

*THE EARL OF GLASGOW rose to draw attention to that part of the Memorandum of Admiralty Work and Progress, 1905, which deals with the education and specialisation of naval officers; and to ask that the Report of the Committee, presided over by Admiral Sir Archibald Douglas, dealing with that question be laid on the Table.

The noble Earl said: My Lords, I ask for your kind indulgence while I make a few remarks upon the Memorandum last issued by the Admiralty, which bears at its foot the signature of Earl Cawdor. I think it is due to the Lords of the Admiralty to congratulate them on the able Memoranda which they have issued to the country during the last five years. Their Memoranda bear traces of the highest ability and grasp of the subject, and of due consideration to the exigencies of the Empire. I think that the last Memorandum which we are now considering is by no means the least able of them all, and although I am going to make some criticisms on the policy in the Memorandum of 1905, which deals with the education and specialisation of naval officers, they will not be criticisms of an unfriendly nature, and I am sure they will be received by the noble Lord at the head of the Admiralty in the spirit in which I offer them.

I spoke on the subject of the education of naval officers three years ago. I was then like one crying in the wilderness; I had no support either in the public Press or in either House of Parliament. But things have changed since then. The opinion of the country is beginning to alter. In the newspapers we see criticisms of the system of naval education, and the other day, in another place, the Secretary to the Admiralty, in answer to a Question addressed to him, had to admit that representations have been made by naval officers to the Admiralty unfavourable to the system of education. I would like to say, with regard to the Memorandum which is now before us, that the important point in it, so far as education goes, is this—

> "A Committee was appointed under the presidency of the Commander-in-Chief at Portsmouth, Admiral Sir Archibald Douglas, G.C.V.O., K.C.B., to consider whether the time has arrived to formulate regulations for the allocation of the duties of future officers in the various branches of the Service, and to report—
>
> (*a*) Whether any necessity exists for the distinct classification of such officers under existing branches of the Navy, with a view to their remaining specialised for the whole of their future service.
>
> (*b*) Whether specialisation for a period of their career only is necessary; and, if so, to indicate the procedure that should be followed to carry out the necessary duties of the Service afloat.
>
> (*c*) How best to provide for filling efficiently the higher scientific appointments of the Admiralty and dockyards."

The Report of that Committee, the Memorandum goes on to say—

> "has convinced the Board that there will be no need for a final division into the three branches, and that specialisation for a period only is necessary, as opposed to permanent classification into separate lines."

Now, I would like to remark on that point that I think the fundamental objection to the Admiralty system of education is the interchangeability which is at the back of the want of specialisation in the different parts of the Service. If you do not specialise, you will be completely reversing the practice in every other employment in the kingdom. In every employment where special trades are being worked you find that from the time when their apprenticeship is over lads are specialised to a certain branch of the work in that employment.

The idea of the Admiralty seems to be that the cadets are to be educated at the college up to a certain time, and that then they will be turned out so crammed with knowledge that they will be able to take up any one of three distinct branches of the Service at any time when called upon to do so. That is the fundamental objection, so far as I can see, to the manner in which the Admiralty propose to educate the young officers of to-day, and it is in contradiction to a certain extent of the project which was brought out in 1903. In that year it was stated that the cadets should all be trained on exactly the same system until they had passed for the rank of sub-lieutenant between the ages of nineteen and twenty, and that at about the age of twenty these sub-lieutenants should be distributed between the three branches of the Service which were essential to the fighting efficiency of the fleet—the executive, the engineer, and the marine. It seems they are not to be permanently specialised, but only temporarily. The fact is, the whole scheme is in difficulties. If all the young men in the Service were exceptionally able, it might be carried out. If they were all as clever as the First Sea Lord of the Admiralty, there would be no difficulty. But the mistake of the First Sea Lord in bringing forward this scheme is that he forgets that all young officers in the Navy are not as clever as himself. You must have a scheme that can be carried out by young men of ordinary education and talents.

I now turn to the question which come next in this Memorandum—the question of the Royal Marines. We are told that—

> "The Royal Marines will not in future possess a staff of officers entirely distinct, as at present, from the Officers of the Royal Navy, but the Board see no reason why the historic traditions of this famous corps should not be carried on with a solidarity enhanced rather than diminished by the closer association of its officers of every rank with the sea service, of which it, as the sea regiment, has been for more than two centuries the honoured and invaluable ally."

If you turn to page 14, you will find a statement which I regret appears in this Memorandum. It is to the effect that—

> "Apart from questions of rank, the Royal Marines have been always intimately associated with the Navy, and it is no disparagement to the marine officer to state that the efficiency and character of these military corps are largely due to their service under naval officers on board ship. In the last ten years some 8,500 marines have been annually borne on the books of H.M. ships, and of this number one-third have been serving on ships without any marine officer on board."

I think it is a disparagement to the Marine officer to state that the efficiency and character of the corps are largely due to their service under naval officers. That statement is not fair to the officers of the Royal Marines. Then the Report states that—

> "The naval officer who qualifies in military duties will be thoroughly competent to undertake the duties of the captain and major of Royal Marines at the divisions as well as afloat, and as the Royal Marines as a body can never be available for brigading with the Army (their services being required for the Fleet), there can be no reason for maintaining a connection with the Army which is one of name only."

I do not know what the Marines will say to that. Is it not almost Gilbertian to think that a corps of 19,000 men are to be deprived of their officers, and to serve under the officers of another branch? Such a thing was never heard of before. Will the officers like it? Will the rank and file like it? What share have the naval officers in the glories of the Marine Service, and why should they be sent to officer that corps? These are questions that deserve the serious consideration of the Admiralty. It is stated in the Report that—

> "It is not proposed in any way to alter the organisation of the Royal Marines or to change the uniform or titles of the rank and file."

That looks as though it was intended to change the uniform of the officers.

Then there is another point with regard to the Marines. It is stated in the Memorandum that—

> "The system of training of officers for military duties [Lieut. M.] will be based on the probable nature of the work to be done by naval landing parties in war time or when undertaking isolated small expeditions. The course will include a study of the principles governing the attack by ships on coast defences and on objectives on land or in harbour, and will also combine a sufficient knowledge of Army organisation to ensure efficient co-operation between the two Services in the case of a joint expedition."

The Earl of Glasgow.

The co-operation of the two services on shore! The Marines when on shore consider themselves a land force. They have always been intended primarily for service afloat, and only to land if required. Can it be said that such emergencies will never occur again? And if a Marine officer in future is to be educated to be one-third an engineer, one-third a naval officer, and one-third a military officer, will he be a good military officer when sent on shore? In the Army it takes an officer all his time to learn his duties properly and I submit that military duties are all that a marine officer should have to learn.

I now turn to the engineers. On page 4 of this Memorandum it is stated that—

> "Sir Archibald Douglas's Committee was also asked to report on the methods for providing warrant officers capable of taking charge of the stokehold and engine-room watches, so as to relieve the more highly trained officers of the ship from the routine duty of engine-room watch-keeping.
>
> It has long been felt that the stoker class should have better opportunities of advancement, and in the Memorandum of December, 1902, the creation of the new chief petty Officer rating of mechanician, to be filled from the stoker class, was announced.
>
> Further consideration of the various duties in the stokehold and engine-room led the Committee to recommend that in future the highly trained engine-room artificer class should not, as heretofore, be called upon to undertake ordinary watch-keeping duties, but should be enabled to devote all their time to their real calling of artificers, and that watchkeeping duties should be undertaken by men selected from the stoker ratings after a suitable course of instruction."

It appears to me that here we have the true inwardness of the treatment of engineers. I wish it to be understood that no one has a higher regard for the engineers as a branch than I have—for engineer officers and for the engineer department in the Navy; and my remarks must be taken as in their defence and in their praise rather than against them. The result of this policy, as far as I can make out, will be this, that on board men-of-war there will be a certain number of watch-keeping warrant officers. They will keep the watches, the artificers will keep the machinery in order, and what is there left for the engineers to do? In my humble opinion one engineer in each ship would be enough, and he would have charge of the discipline and go round and see that things were all right. And then we should say that the result of the agitation of the engineers to better themselves had resulted in their entire disappearance. I am very sorry. I wish they had been left alone, as I wish that the Marines had been left alone.

Now I come to the reason why I submit that the Report of the Committee of which Sir Archibald Douglas was Chairman should be given to the public. I am very glad that the Admiralty took the step of appointing a Committee to inquire into these matters; but I should like to know why, before inaugurating such a revolution in the education of the Navy, they did not have a Committee of the senior officers of the Navy to consider the subject. If they had done that, this education scheme would never have survived its state of embryo. Sir Archibald Douglas is an officer in whom the Services place great reliance, and for whom they have very much respect. The Committee have sat, and we know the result at which they have arrived; but we do not know the process of reasoning by which they came to their decision. We want to know who composed that Committee, what was the evidence put before them, and what were the reasons they had for coming to this conclusion. The conclusion to which they have come is that, after the present Naval College has been in existence for only two years, they have found sufficient encouragement to say that for all future time it will be a success. Why, the success of this scheme will not be known for twenty years. How, then, could they come to this extraordinary decision? Has any other country followed this example? Has any other country tried the procedure of turning all the officers into one mould and making them all engineers, deck officers, and marines? Can it be denied that this is a leap in the dark? Is it not terrible to think that this country, which depends on the Navy for its defence, which has built the most magnificent force of ships that has ever been seen, will be in suspense for the next twenty years before it knows whether the officers who will then be called upon to command those ships will be fit for their work or not?

I spoke on this subject with great reluctance in 1903. I took the liberty of suggesting three things to Lord Selborne, the then First Lord of the Admiralty. I will summarise very briefly those suggestions. The first was that specialisation should take place when the cadets left the college after their three years course there; that the future deck officers should then go to sea for three years, that the engineers should go to Keyham College, and the Marine officers to the Naval College at Greenwich as at present for the studies for which their previous training would have qualified them. I said it was believed that the three branches of young officers would find that they would then have a full curriculum of work amply sufficient to occupy them until they were ready to pass through their next examination, and it was certain that if the young engineers did not begin the study of their own profession until they were nineteen they would never become engineers at all. Secondly, I said it was hoped that interchangeability would not be resorted to after they left the Naval College; and, thirdly, I said that I thought it would be a distinct improvement to the scheme, from the noble Lord's own point of view, if the Marine officers were left out of it after their training in the Naval College was over. I submitted that the advice which, according to the Memorandum, Marine officers were to be authorised to give with respect to landing parties and operations on shore would be more valuable if it came from officers who were able to turn their whole attention to military subjects. I submit that that advice is just as worth listening to now as it was then. It may be thought by some people not to be worth listening to; but I submit that it is the only safe way in which the education of the officers of the Fleet can be carried out, and I hope and trust, whatever may be the result of this Memorandum, that when the next Board of Admiralty comes to the head of affairs we will see a different course of education for naval officers.

VISCOUNT GOSCHEN: My Lords, it was a happy idea on the part of my noble friend Lord Brassey to take this opportunity of bringing the Memorandum of the late First Lord of the Admiralty under the notice of your Lordships' House. The moment is well chosen, because we have the Memorandum before us, and because the time constitutes, I may say, an interlude between the reigns of two First Lords. The present First Lord, whom I congratulate upon his appointment, having been so short a time in office, nothing which falls from us in this debate can possibly be considered to be directed against him. Party spirit, therefore, entirely vanishes, not only for the present, but, I hope, for the future. I am sure the noble Lord will have heard that successive First Lords of the Admiralty have done all they could in late years to support each other, irrespective of Party, for the furtherance of naval efficiency, and it is in that spirit, my Lords, that I wish to speak to-day upon the Memorandum which has been justly praised for its ability by my noble friend who has just sat down. It is a document brilliant, literary, explanatory, congratulatory to a very great extent, and one to be read with interest; and I think that when the First Lord peruses its forty pages he will realise the immense and wide responsibilities that rest upon him. The mass of materials, the mass of subjects with which he has to deal, are almost oppressive.

The speech of the noble Lord who initiated this discussion has already illustrated the number of topics that have to be dealt with, all of which deserve attention. I do not propose to follow my noble friend and enter in detail into the great changes made. Those changes have been vast. To many of them I give hearty and entire support, upon some I am doubtful, and from others I dissent; and if to-night I dwell more upon those that I have to criticise it is because the others have been generally accepted and pronounced upon by the public and the service as having much to recommend them. I congratulate the Board upon many of the changes which they have made during the last three years.

My noble friend Lord Brassey did not allude to one far-reaching change which has been received with great applause, and justly so—the new strategic distribution of the Fleet. The new strategic distribution of the Fleet shows how the Admiralty have appreciated the changes in the situation to-day; the progress made in the naval power of other countries, the rise in the naval position of the United States and of Germany, the expansion of Japan, the destruction of the Russian Fleet—all these changes must necessarily influence, and have necessarily influenced, the Admiralty; and I congratulate them upon the changes they have made. The strategic redistribution of the Fleet led to another great reform on which I have nothing but personal commendation to bestow—the arrangements for nucleus crews and the new distribution of the reserve. By that reform the Navy is more ready for immediate action, with the crews told off to the ships in such a manner that they can be more rapidly sent to sea with homogeneous crews than was possible before. That is a great improvement.

Other administrative reforms, for instance, those in relation to dockyards, are in the right direction. The elimination of obsolete ships has been carried very far in a rather sensational and dramatic manner; but probably a right principle has been followed, and a considerable reduction of expenditure has resulted.

Now I come to a point in connection with the reforms which is not mentioned in the Memorandum, and on which I should like to have some explanation. I refer to the changes that have been made in the means for protecting some of our home waters and ports. I have seen it stated that the arrangements which had been elaborated for defending such places as the Firth of Forth and Berehaven by electric lighting and submarine mines have been given up by the Army. I think Mr. Arnold-Forster said they did not want to have any of these military aquatics. Upon this matter I should like to be informed whether the Navy has undertaken these duties, and how. There were a great many Naval Volunteers along our coasts who were thought specially competent to deal with these mining arrangements—men coming from the great engineering works; and

Viscount Goschen.

I should like to know, among the various changes that have occurred, what has become of the men who were elaborately trained in submarine mining, and whether their services will be utilised for defensive works.

I pass now to that to which I wanted mainly to devote myself this evening —the questions of the *personnel.* I would wish to know more of the proposed changes in the Coastguard Service. The Coastguards have been a very valuable body of men, and service therein has been looked forward to by blue-jackets as of very honourable character. I do not know whether I am correct, but I understand that great changes are to be made in that service. Then there is the Royal Navy Reserve. That is a force in which during my time of office I took a very considerable interest. They number about 25,000 men, and very high authorities pressed the Admiralty that that was by no means a proper and right number, but that we ought to have 60,000, 70,000 or 80,000 men in the Reserve. Now I understand—and again I wish to have information on the point—that the Royal Naval Reserve is no longer looked upon with the same favour. The Memorandum states, I think, that entries have been stopped. It seems to me to be a matter of great importance that you should have a large number of reserve men upon whom you could put your hand immediately on the outbreak of war.

I would regret if the importance of having a large Naval Reserve is not fully recognised by those at present at the Admiralty. It is not so easy to secure men. It is said that they would go to sea for three months. But will they be ready to go to sea for three months? Have the authorities connected with the Reserve been consulted on that point? When we made changes in the direction of offering a certain number of men the opportunity of going to sea we consulted all those who might be able to give us a valuable opinion on the habits and disposition of the fishermen and sailors round our coasts. It is not enough to say a thing shall be done. It is most important that we should know that we should be able to get the men, and I trust that on a future occasion we may hear up to what standard the Admiralty desire to work in that direction. The arrangement was that the Royal Naval Reserve were to be called up early on the threatening of hostilities. It was arranged where they were all to be sent. Officers were ready appointed to train them and be at their head, and I should like to know whether that old arrangement has been superseded, and, if so, why?

I pass to another most serious change which is proposed, of which it is impossible to judge unless one knows more than is recorded in the Memorandum—I refer to the question of short service. The glory of the British Navy has been long service. Long service has made our blue-jackets what they have become. No doubt it has been an expensive system, but many naval officers competent to judge consider that long service is one of those parts of the naval system which it would be very dangerous to touch, and the touching of which they would deprecate with all the energy in their power. I do not say that changes may not be necessary to a slight extent, because no doubt there are many functions in a man-of-war which can be performed by men more hastily recruited and of less training, but the steadying influences of long service must be very strong in a man-of-war, and I am sure the Service would be glad to know from those in authority to what point short service is to supersede long service. I have not expressed that very well, because short service is not to supersede long service, but there are only to be a certain number allowed on long service. The proportions have not yet been put before the country, and I conclude that no final decision has been arrived at by the Admiralty as to the proportion which short-service men are to bear to long-service men. I trust that the disproportion will not be great.

I hope your Lordships will recognise that I do not approach this question from the point of view of the old-fashioned administrator who is not amenable to the influence of new ideas. I admit that some change may be desirable, but I do think it necessary at the same time to warn the First Lord that this is a matter of stupendous importance to the Navy and to the country.

I pass now to the most important part, in my judgment, of the Memorandum, a part which has been touched upon already by my noble friend who spoke last—the training of naval officers. This is a question which every Member of your Lordships' House must see affects vitally the whole future of the Navy, the whole efficiency of the Navy, and the whole contentment of the Navy. The change is nothing less than a revolution, and it is needful that the House and the country should see whether it is founded on sound principles. On my responsibility as an old First Lord of the Admiralty, I state—and I say it with regret, because I am always so anxious that the Service and the Board of Admiralty should stand in the most friendly and confidential relations—I state to your Lordships and to the public that there exists in the Navy, to my certain knowledge, a wide-spread alarm, a deep apprehension and anxiety with regard to this scheme of interchangeability which is to be the foundation of the future officering of the Navy.

I use strong language—I am bound to use strong language, because I have heard what I cannot call less than utterances of despair on the part of naval officers. Do not let it be said that those who express these fears belong to the old-fashioned school, or that they are faddists or factious people. I can tell the House that there are amongst these critics many men who would command great authority for their opinions were their names to be made known, as thoroughly experienced men acquainted with all the necessities of the Service; and many of them are opposed —and opposed to a degree which I cannot exaggerate—to the proposed plan of interchangeability. While I will not argue the question now, I entreat the First Lord and all those who can exercise any influence to look thoroughly into the subject. I hope they will not consider this as finally settled, but will consult the best authorities on the question.

On what authority is the change based? What is urged as the authority for this scheme is the Report of the Committee presided over by Sir Archibald Douglas—a Report which we have not seen, and of the composition of which Committee we are ignorant. It is little short of an injustice to the Service and to the public to withhold the names of those who recommended this revolution, the terms in which it has been proposed, the evidence taken by the Committee, and whether or not there was a Minority Report. We want to know the whole truth about the question. I observe that the Secretary to the Admiralty has refused the information in the other House; but I cannot believe that the noble Lord will refuse it to your Lordships. When a Department quotes an authority and relies upon it, then the names ought to be produced.

This great scheme of interchangeability demands that an officer may be either a marine or an engineer or an executive officer. The argument is not only new, but it is almost ludicrous, that because of two years' teaching at Osborne a boy when he arrives at the age of twenty will be able to perform the duties of an engineer, a marine, or an executive officer. In passing, I may say that nothing could be more splendid than the organisation of the college at Osborne. It does the Admiralty and the authorities the greatest credit. Both Osborne and Dartmouth are schools of the very highest merit. I doubt whether there is any public school that could give a better, if as good an education as that imparted to the cadets at Osborne. But it does not follow, because these little fellows do well for a couple of years, that when they grow up their brains will be sufficient to take in all that is to be taught.

What is it that officers in the Navy have to learn? An executive officer has to learn strategy, diplomacy, languages, manoeuvres, tactics, the methods of command at sea, and some knowledge no doubt of engineering, sufficient to be able to have a general acquaintance with the propelling power of his ship. Then consider what the engineer officer and the marine officer have to learn. How is it to be supposed that one man will be able to acquire in the course of a few years the whole of this knowledge? By the time an engineer, for example, is twenty or twenty-five he has to keep in touch with the progress of science, with all the inventions in engines and boilers, as well as with the progress of lighting and chemistry. Is the acquisition of such knowledge not enough for a man, and do your Lordships believe that if his time were divided among other duties he would become the equal of the man who devoted himself to specialised study in the work which falls to the engineer?

The noble Earl who preceded me made an eloquent speech with reference to the Marines. I do not think I need add to what he said except to tell your Lordships that I understand the Marines are broken-hearted; they look on the changes which are to be introduced as striking at the whole vitality of the corps. The 19,000 men in this splendid corps are seasoned men, men of finer physique than the men in the Army and better shots, and is it to be supposed that that corps will have the same attractions if the proposed change is carriedout? I think that that part of the scheme might be abandoned. My noble friend has vast changes to make. Let this one be postponed. Let there be restored to the Marines a feeling that no destructive hand shall fall on them, and that justice will be done to them. They want officers belonging to their own corps, inspired by their own sentiments and traditions, men under whom they have served, and with whom they have been brought up since they were cadets, and between whom those ties exist which stand for so much in the relations between officers and men. The corps ought not to be officered by temporary officers belonging to an entirely different department. The system of interchangeability between Marine officers and engineers will have this result, that eventually the sergeant of Marines will practically rule the corps and the engine-room artificers will by degrees push themselves up by a way which has been mapped out for them by the proposals of the Board of Admiralty. The whole of this movement had its origin in the circumstance that the social standing of the engineers was not satisfactory; their emoluments, I believe, were not unsatisfactory, but they were dissatisfied with their position in consequence of the increasing importance of their duties. That was a matter that had to be dealt with; but is it wise to apply a remedy which may be far more serious than the grievance?

The common entry for Marines engineers and executive officers was claimed as a very wise proceeding. These various classes were all to be educated together up to a certain point, so that class feeling might be eliminated. When that certain point came they were to be specialised, and a certain number were to be made Marines, a certain number engineers, and a certain number executive officers. There the difficulty arose. The Admiralty did not see how to deal with the choice between the men among these three branches, and I understand they were rather afraid that parents would not wish their sons to be put into the engine-room. They thought it would discourage parents if they thought the future of their sons was to be in the stokehold, and in order to meet this difficulty they stumbled or hit upon this scheme of interchangeability against which I venture to enter my protest.

In these days it is held by naval officers with passionate conviction that specialisation is more than ever necessary in the engineering branch and in the engine-room; and why at this moment specialisation in an important branch should be discouraged and discarded is what they cannot understand, and they hold that there has not been sufficient authority or evidence to justify it I assure the First Lord that I am anxious to do all I can to support him. I think, however, that my noble friend has assented too soon to this interchangeability, and I trust it is not too late to reconsider it.

I hope I may be allowed to make an appeal to a patriotic Press not to discourage criticisms of the Admiralty proposals, or to treat honest criticism as merely fractious or old-fashioned. Those who are on active service are practically restrained by discipline from communicating with the Press, and it is a pain to every naval officer who respects himself if he has any public criticism to make upon his chiefs. Besides that, a naval officer has to depend on the Board of Admiralty for promotion and for appointments. There is every consideration for his remaining silent. But there is all the more reason, surely, if they have no access to the Press, that those who feel for them, and who believe they know their sentiments, should speak out.

I assure your Lordships that it is profoundly distasteful to me to have to pronounce so strongly on one of the most important subjects that can be brought forward, but I have felt it my duty on this occasion to speak out. Twice I have had the honour and proud privilege of presiding over the naval service, and nothing gives me greater pleasure than to think that I succeeded in winning, to a great extent I hope, the confidence and regard of the service. I feel sure that my noble friend the First Lord will give his best efforts to this matter. If he will communicate—as the etiquette of the service allows far more than in the case of the military service—with all classes of officers, my noble friend will realise what the service really thinks; and if he can persuade the Government to alter such errors as may exist in the system, my noble friend will reap the richest reward in the gratitude of the finest service in the world.

*Lord ELLENBOROUGH: My Lords, there has been continuity in the administration of the last two First Lords of the Admiralty, and I hope that this continuity will be adhered to under the present First Lord, especially as regards the system of entering officers. I am a believer in the present system of testing the capacity of a boy before allowing him to go through the whole course at Osborne. At present the examination practically lasts a year, during the whole of which the candidate is under supervision both in working hours and in playtime.

If the thousands of boys who wish to become officers in the Navy were given a year's education as a test it would cost too much money. Therefore the commonsense plan has been adopted of giving a larger number of nominations than the number of cadets required, of interviewing the boy, and of subjecting him to a qualifying examination, before allowing him to go to Osborne. As regards nominations I can well understand that a First Lord would personally be glad to be relieved from the necessity of refusing some hundreds of applicants, but I think that it is a duty which should be performed by one person only, and if that person's task were lightened, the service would suffer. Naval cadets should be selected from among the sons of educated men. The tone of boys brought up in good homes is likely to be superior to that of boys brought up anyhow. To go back to a competitive examination for candidates of tender years would be a most retrograde step, and I hope that the present First Lord will not surrender the principle of nomination, in compliance with a cry got up by persons who know little of the Navy. Horses are not allowed to be raced until they are two years old, and even then it is not good for them.

The question of interviewing the boy has been much discussed. It is a simple and commonsense plan. In business and in private life, almost every employer interviews a person before taking him into their service. The three interviewers, who are constantly changed, represent the country, and they have, I believe, done their work at least as well as the average employer. It is, however, a new idea to professional examiners and schoolmasters. In my opinion it is a very much better plan than the old Chinese system of a paper, pen and ink examination, lasting three days. The only improvement I can suggest would be to nominate more competitors and to send more of them away during the first year. As I said before, we want the very best. At the early age at which boys enter the Navy, what you want to find out is not so much what they actually know on joining, but what capacity they may have for absorbing the knowledge that you intend to impart to them. This can be more easily ascertained during their residence at Osborne than in a three-day examination at Burlington House.

I heartily congratulate Admiral Sir John Fisher and his colleagues on having shaken off the yoke of the public schools with their Elizabethan education, and on giving lads destined for the sea instruction more suited to a post-Victorian age. The supporters of instruction in the dead languages say that their system produces statesmen, but it is not their little grammatical tricks or their barbarous pronunciation of the languages of

Cicero and Demosthenes that makes statesmen, but a knowledge of history, and that subject I am glad to see is not neglected either at Osborne or at Dartmouth. English, too, is also taught at both these places. These subjects are unfortunately too often neglected at scientific middle-class schools. The old public schools and modern technical schools have much to learn from one another. In their play-hours, boys at public schools are taught to look upon good cricketers as demi-gods. But games are kept in their proper place at Osborne. It is, I think, at present the best school in England for any boy who is not specialising for the Church or the Bar, and if our public schools do not mend their ways, I hope that the War Office will take courage, follow the lead of the Admiralty, and establish schools of their own. As for those boys who have the misfortune to be removed from Osborne, I am sure that they will feel grateful in after life for the time spent there, and that they will have learnt many things necessary to a man who has to live in this age of machinery, the twentieth century.

The cadets who now go on to Dartmouth have been found much superior in knowledge and general intelligence to those who came direct from public or private schools. When I visited Osborne, I was glad to see from the cadets' work-books that mechanical drawing is properly taught there. When I became a first lieutenant I felt the greatest inconvenience from being unable to draw sketches to scale of the work I wanted done by the ship's artificers. I do not approve of over-working boys, but a knowledge of shorthand is of the greatest help in all walks of life in enabling a man to take rapid notes of any conversation on duty or on business. I believe that very few, if any, naval officers can write shorthand, so that they do not know the value of it. I think that the question of adding it to the curriculum might be taken into consideration, and I should also suggest that Field-Marshal Lord Wolseley's opinion might be taken on that point.

As regards our future engineers, it is intended to change the system laid down in 1902, and to "specialise" for the different duties without separating into permanent and distinctive branches. But since 1902 it has been decided that only three engineers are to be borne in a battleship; that artificer engineers are to go through a severer course of study; that they are to be relieved from watch keeping, so as to have more leisure to work at repairs; that the best men among the stokers are to be made warrant officers and given charge of a watch. I will not express an opinion of my own on a subject on which I find so many well-known officers differ, but I will point out that many of them think that it will be very difficult for an engineer to keep up his knowledge of manœuvring during six or eight years of duty down below. Modern men-of-war may appear to be very easy to handle, but they are not so in reality. When turning, more especially when in a current or tide-way, they are liable to what might be called side-slip, and in that respect are as bad as motor omnibuses on a slippery wood pavement. They have no centre keel to keep them straight as the old-fashioned ships had.

The charge of the engines in a battleship or a cruiser will take a man all his time, and though marine, torpedo, and gunnery officers can be on deck when a fleet is manœuvring, or when their ship is going in or out of harbour, the engineer officers would usually have their own work to attend to below. We have, as it is, far too many collisions in the Navy, and a fear exists that under this system their number will be increased. But Admiralty regulations are not the laws of the Medes and Persians. For instance, the rules for specialisation have undergone a change since 1902, and are sure to undergo some further change before any of the Osborne entries reach the rank of lieutenant. The difficulty may, I think, be overcome by giving a substantial increase of pay to officers who specialise for ever between the ages of twenty-five and thirty. Mankind, even if it runs machines, is very human. The young men who wish to marry at that age would accept the increased income. The engine-room would then be run by young married men, while the more ambitious and hard-hearted bachelor would remain on the bridge.

If during the next five or six years our inventors continue to progress at the present rate there will be great changes in the material of the Navy. The engines may all be turbines. There will also be another Admiralty. The present First Lord may or may not be there, but his naval colleagues will have completed their period of service. That new Admiralty will be able to sort out its engineers, artificers, and warrant officers very much better than the present one, because it will have the actual men and ships before it, whereas the present Administration has before it only the imaginary type of officer, artificer and warrant officer that it expects the new system of education to provide. We must trust to the Admiralty of the future, and hope it will not put round men into square holes. There will be ample time for those opposed to interchangeability to assert their opinions. In the meanwhile, we must rest satisfied with the knowledge that a considerable number of lads and young men are being given the best possible education for the different branches of the service, and that future executive officers will be able to carry out all repairs connected with their guns, torpedoes, and telegraphs without perpetually requiring the assistance of officers whose chief duty it is to attend to the propulsion of the ship.

The re-stationing of our men-of-war has been rendered necessary by the change in the balance and bases of Naval Power, and by the substitution of fast steamers for sailing ships. I have always held that the greatest danger that this country is exposed to is surprise in the time of peace. This redistribution has greatly lessened the risk of such a misfortune. We must be supreme in Home waters first. If we are, the supremacy of other seas will probably follow. I hope that this necessity will not be forgotten, and that while our manœuvres are being carried out in the Atlantic in June, a sufficient force will be left in Home waters to guard our coasts against a possible attack.

I am also glad to see that an endeavour is to be made to make merchant ships understand that they run a risk of capture in war time. The managers of those firms whose ships will not be allowed to assist in the manœuvres, and whose vessels decline to look out for signals, would probably be found among those who would shriek the loudest if their ships were captured at the commencement of a war.

Rapid shipbuilding is most desirable. I congratulate Admiral Sir Henry Barry and those engaged in the construction of the "Dreadnought" on their successful experiment. The keel of the "Dreadnought" was laid on a Monday at 7 o'clock. I saw that vessel on the Tuesday, and again on the Saturday after her keel was laid. The amount built into her in that short time was wonderful. Whether on another occasion more men could be employed with less overtime, requires consideration. Overtime is all very well for a short period, but when too prolonged, it exhausts the workmen and makes them discontented. The present First Lord will hear a great deal about this point when he goes to Portsmouth. It is also a question as to what date should be looked upon as that of the commencement of a ship, when comparing the time of construction with that in private yards. If many hundreds of tons of material have been cut into shape before the keel is laid, it is scarcely fair to take the date from the laying of the keel as that of the commencement of the ship.

Some writers in magazines and in the public Press are alarmed at the comparative number of battleships that other countries will possess in a few years time. At the present moment I do not share these alarms. I think that the Admiralty should watch foreign yards more closely than foreign programmes. If our Admiralty consider that foreign yards are too active, they should at once alter their own programme, and lay down more ships without talking too much about it. They should not give an enemy a six months start, because Parliament is not sitting. If it was necessary to do such a thing Parliament would pass a Bill of Indemnity. The present House of Commons would do it, and the last House of Commons would have done it, and I am sure that it would be difficult to find in English history two successive Houses more differently constituted. If Parliament was specially summoned to vote the necessary money, such a proceeding might be taken as a threat, and put further strain on the diplomatic situation.

I see that non-continuous service is to be established concurrently with the present system. It can only be looked upon as an experiment. I hope that it may have the effect of increasing our Reserves, but it will take some years to see how it answers. This will also be a question for Admiralties of the future to deal with.

The new system under which the Royal Naval Reserve will have to serve part of their time on board a man-of-war at sea, instead of merely going on board a drill ship in the morning, will greatly increase their efficiency. I am, however, somewhat anxious as to how far this change may affect their numbers. The Memorandum says that gunnery is a duty that is unlikely to fall on Reserve men in time of war. I hope that that does not mean that they are not to be taught gunnery. Means ought certainly to be taken to ascertain if there are any exceptionally good shots to be found among the 27,000 men who constitute that force, in which case such men might be dealt with by special regulations.

The improved pensions for chief petty officers will tend to attract and keep in the service the best men, and I think that the country will get full value for it. The system of continuing allotments when ships have sailed for foreign stations will be of great benefit to the seamen's relations. It ought to have been done long ago.

I shall only make one remark about gunnery. It has immensely improved since Admiral Sir Percy Scott has been allowed to take it in hand. The competitions between ships are, I understand, all carried out in fine weather because any competition would otherwise be unfair. But I see no mention of practice in bad weather. Perhaps this is only an omission. The battle of Tsusima was fought in very bad weather, and men should have experience in handling their guns under such conditions.

I am glad to notice that 1,000 undesirables have been removed from the Navy. There is always a small percentage of such men in every ship. Their removal makes life much pleasanter on the lower deck, and greatly reduces the number of minor punishments. In one ship that I was in, the commanding officer reported that the number of minor punishments might appear large for so small a ship, but half of them had been inflicted on one man, who never refused to work, but never did any work. Imprisonment in cells he delighted in, as there was no hard labour. He happened to be a stoker, and as there were only two stokers in each watch, the life of the other stoker was not a happy one when under steam. We afterwards found that he was a deserter from the Militia. We tried to send him back. The military authorities, however, refused to take him, and asked us to forward to them a penny a day for money he owed to their department. It took us about two years to get rid of him. His leave was never stopped for long, for it was hoped that he might treat the Navy as he had treated the Militia.

The new arrangement for refits, by which only a certain number of our ships are to be undergoing repair at any one time, will lessen the chances of our being surprised in the time of peace.

Obsolescence is a new word to me as a naval term. I have always known the process as "scrapping." Judicious scrapping has been the basis of the prosperity of many business firms, more especially those more or less connected with iron and steel, and in these days of perpetual invention the policy of scrapping all ships of a certain age is undoubtedly the correct one. It is better to spend money on ship-building than on extensive repairs. Look how quickly men change their motor cars, not because the engine is worn out but because new improvements have made them out of date. The "Victory" was forty years old at Trafalgar, and served a commission in the Baltic afterwards, but those days are long past. Old ships are over-weighted with weak armour and have less powerful guns; most of them have less speed, and yet they must still be manned by our best seamen, whom we could not well spare in war. For many years, when roughly estimating the forces of different fleets, I used to take the tonnage of the different ships and subtract five per cent. of that tonnage for every year of their age, so that at twenty years a war ship would be considered valueless. But many officers now-a-days put the useful life of a man-of-war at only fifteen years.

I am glad to see that arrangements have been made for supplying periodicals and newspapers for the use of the men. When they are off duty and leave cannot be granted, life is often very dull on board ship, and reading will tend to increase the general knowledge and intelligence of the man. I agree with the remarks made by the noble Viscount who preceded me on the number of naval officers who are practically self-educated. To what degree a man can be self-educated largely depends on the libraries to which he has access.

If the Admiralty wish certain subjects of study to be taken up in the Navy, I suggest that they should not always make them compulsory with examinations, but merely place books on those subjects in the ship's libraries. Some officers would be sure to read them.

Not a word is said in this Memorandum about either submarines or mechanical or electrical mines. But in another document we are informed that eleven submarines are being built. As I think that there is much to be said in favour of keeping secret the details connected with submarines, I shall say nothing about them either. But I shall take this opportunity of voicing the gratitude of a number of my countrymen in regard to those who serve on board these vessels, who for the benefit of their country are constantly running war risks in time of peace. From the experience of the Japanese war, I should think it a great mistake to dispense entirely with electrical and mechanical mines. Recollect that the only Japanese battleships sunk in the war were sunk by Russian mines. At any rate, as our enemies are sure to employ them against us in shallow water, our men ought to have experience in laying down and sweeping for dummy mines.

Our fleets cannot always be attended by submarines when in distant harbours, and when refitting at a temporary base in a state of comparative unreadiness, whether alone or in company, they will be much more exposed to attack by other ships if they are known to be unprotected by mines of any description. During the civil war in America it was the constant practice of both sides to eke out a short supply of mines by anchoring logs of wood so as to induce the enemy to act cautiously. But if it is known that we are unprotected by mines of any description we shall be unable to deceive an enemy in this manner. He will attack us instantly without waiting to sweep for mines, instead of giving us time to prepare for him. Patterns of sweeping apparatus that have stood the test of experience ought to be kept in store, so that officers should know how to fit up the cheap merchant ships that would be used for sweeping.

I must call attention to another matter. The King's Regulations and Admiralty instructions have been out of print for two years and a half. I ordered a copy about eighteen months ago, but could not obtain one. Last week I made a further application to a Portsmouth bookseller, who tells me that they have been out of print since the latter end of 1903. I well recollect the inconvenience caused by delay in republishing the Queen's Regulations many years ago, but I thought that such procrastination was a thing of the past. There are now 129,000 men in the Navy, some hundreds of whose officers cannot get a copy of the King's Regulations except by borrowing a copy from a senior, who is not likely to be able to spare his copy for any length of time. I say this advisedly, for many hundreds of officers have obtained their commissions and many officers of the civil branch have joined the service since the King's Regulations have been out of print. I hope that the First Lord of the Admiralty will lose no time in re-organising the department responsible for this mischievous and unreasonable delay.

In conclusion, I wish to express my regret that during the short time that the noble Earl was at the Admiralty ill-health prevented him from taking as active a part as he might have wished, and to state that I consider that he and his colleagues have handed over to his successor a most efficient Navy, and that I hope the present First Lord will be able to maintain that efficiency. But that cannot be done by sitting still and changing nothing, or by accepting the advice of theorists and faddists, some of whom believe that a paper treaty declaring private property at sea to be inviolable in time of war will be sufficient to secure our food supply. Paper will not secure our daily bread in time of war; but well-handled steel may be able to do so. I also hope that the First Lord will turn a deaf ear to those who think more of conciliating a small portion of the electorate than of the interests of the nation as a whole. I wish the noble Lord every success in his administration.

* **EARL CAWDOR**: My Lords, I shall not detain your Lordships long, but there are some points in this debate on which the House will expect me to make some observations. First of all, may I say that no one in my position, nor in that of the noble Lord opposite, can for a moment object or demur to the tone of the criticisms which have been made to-night by noble Lords who stand high in the knowledge of naval matters, and who have criticised what they have had to criticise in a friendly, if in a very decisive, spirit.

The noble Lord who raised this debate spoke first of the efficiency of the Fleet, and I was glad to notice that in all the subsequent speeches much the same view was taken on that point. May I say upon that subject, that the effect of removing obsolete vessels from the Fleet has been that we are now enabled to maintain sixteen more fighting ships in full commission and 154 more ships in partial commission, while saving £1,292,000 in upkeep as compared with the Fleet in January, 1904? I think that is not a very unsatisfactory state of things to have achieved in a very short time.

Lord Brassey seems to think that at Osborne and Dartmouth hardly sufficient attention is given to foreign languages. The noble Lord, I think, went so far as to suggest that we should discard French in certain cases and teach German; diminish mathematical teaching to some extent, and teach more of foreign languages. If the noble Lord looks carefully at what is being taught at Dartmouth, he will find that the essentials of naval training are being taught there very well, and that there is really no time for any addition to the syllabus.

The noble Lord seems to have some doubt as to whether it was wise to do away with intermediate armament. I can only say that the almost unanimous feeling of experts, so far as I have been able to judge, is in favour of getting rid of the intermediate armament and going in for smaller guns for protection from torpedo-vessels and one gun of very considerable power. It is rather interesting to learn, too, that foreign countries have, since we adopted this plan, come to the conclusion that it is the right thing to do. I find that the Reporter on French Navy Estimates for this year points out that this intermediate artillery ought to disappear from their battleships, and that it is only necessary to have guns of large calibre, and, for preference, of a single type.

The noble Viscount (Lord Goschen) than whom no one is more beloved in the Navy as one of the best First Lords they have ever had, spoke with regard to the interchangeability of officers and of the widespread alarm and the utterances of despair there were amongst the opponents of the scheme throughout the Navy. I do not know who those may be, though I think I can guess some of them. But the real fact is that those who are opponents of these schemes are people who make themselves very much heard. Those who accept the schemes and approve of them do not rush into print with the same vivacity or virulence of expression, but quietly and confidently wait for the reforms of which they approve to be carried out.

VISCOUNT GOSCHEN: Those I had in my mind did not violently rush into print.

***EARL CAWDOR**: But they have, somehow, made their opinions known to the noble Viscount; and it is undoubtedly the fact that those who are opposed to the scheme do make their opinions more generally known than those who approve them.

VISCOUNT GOSCHEN: I cannot admit that.

*EARL CAWDOR: I could tell the noble Viscount of a number of very distinguished naval officers who approve entirely of this suggestion of interchangeability. I think the noble Viscount put the case too high when he said there was widespread opposition to this scheme among the senior officers of the Navy. I know of many who approve of it. The interchangeability and training of officers is a question of great importance, and I think I can satisfy your Lordships that it is not such a foolish scheme after all.

I venture to say that no school in the country gives an education nearly as efficient as that which is given at Osborne and at Dartmouth. It is admirable all the way through, and it is admirable to a great extent on this ground—that the cadets are taught in small classes by most skilled teachers. I would urge the noble Lord at the head of the Admiralty to see that that part of the scheme is adhered to rigidly. I hope in any conversation he may have with the Treasury he will be determined in getting the best teachers and seeing that they are properly paid. I do not know the exact state in which those proceedings may be, but a Committee was, I believe, appointed to consider the matter. I do hope it will be borne in mind that it is of the essence of the success of the scheme that the classes must be small and the teachers absolutely first-rate.

Now, with regard to the teaching given. The cadets have four years at Osborne and Dartmouth Colleges, and six months on cruisers undergoing special skilled training, and then they go on for three years as midshipmen. At Osborne and Dartmouth 30 per cent. of their time is taken up in engineering, 50 per cent. in mathematical and general subjects, and 20 per cent. in executive seamanship. They are then drafted to sea as midshipmen. They are trained with other midshipmen of their own age, and their study is not interfered with by the intervention of cadets of an older class. We are told that we ought not to have come to a conclusion at the present time on this question of interchangeability; that it was much too soon, and that we should have waited. It is very easy for the critic to wait; it is not so easy for the person who has to deal with this matter and see it through. We had pressed on us the view that both cadets and their parents were entitled to know what their future was going to be. But that would not have made us, under any circumstances, come to a conclusion before we thought we had sufficient facts upon which to form aur opinion. The result of two years training of boys from thirteen to fifteen at Osborne did give us, with the assistance of our skilled advisers in educational matters, a very good idea of what the result of that education would be. We were satisfied with the progress made during these two years, and we thought that we were justified—and I hold that we were—in coming to the conclusion that the interchangeability of officers so trained would be possible.

In former days officers were non-interchangeable. You had on your ships executive officers for fighting, for navigation, and for supreme control; you had, secondly, Marine officers to assist in fighting, but to have no concern with navigation or propulsion, and no executive control; you had, thirdly, engineers who were classed as non-combatant to control the means of propulsion. Surely it is a strange thing that the officer who has absolute control of the propelling power of the ship should be debarred from rising to the highest commands in the Service. That has been the case up to the present time.

In future, instead of that scheme, executive, engineering, or marine duties will be performed by officers of common entry and common training. They will specialise for different duties without separating into permanently distinct branches. Each officer will have special knowledge in one particular branch of the Service, but all officers will have a general knowledge of the different branches, and all will have an opportunity of fitting themselves for the position of a captain of a ship: indeed, of rising to the highest positions in their profession. If that scheme can be properly carried out I maintain that it must largely increase the efficiency of the officers, and therefore the efficiency of the Navy itself.

I may be asked what is the prospect of the efficiency of future naval officers under these conditions. I will take them one by one. The general service lieutenant who does not specialise will be far better trained in deck duties as a midshipman than formerly, and will have considerable training as an engineer in the engine-room. All round, he will be a better trained officer for general purposes than he was before. The gunnery lieutenant's career will be practically unaltered under the new scheme, except that he will have a far better mechanical training than he had before, and to that extent must be a better officer. The torpedo lieutenant, as far as electrical matters are concerned will have a far better early mechanical training. The navigating lieutenant will have engineer training, which, if not necessary for him, perhaps, as a navigating lieutenant, will be of great value to him when he becomes, if he should become, captain of a warship. These points are not so much in dispute.

I will now come to the cases upon which the noble Viscount holds so strong an opinion, and upon which he has expressed himself so forcibly this afternoon. I mean the cases of the marine officer and the engineer officer and their proposed interchangeability as executive officers. In future, the Marine officer will be trained as a naval officer. He will undergo a period of military training sufficient in our opinion, to make him an efficient military officer for the duties he will have to perform as a Marine. He will be able to look forward—and this is an enormous improvement—to filling high posts in the Navy. There are at the present time hardly any high posts that can be filled by Marine officers. It has always been a trouble to those in authority at the Admiralty that they have had so little to hold out to Marine officers in the way of high posts. For general service the Marine officer will be the same as the other naval officers we have discussed. He will have an eighteen months' course in addition to the small arm and company drill he has had as a midshipman, and sea life will enable him to carry out his duties as a Marine officer far better than if he had not had it.

It is a mistake to suppose that there is any regimental system or any long-continued association between officers and men in the Marine corps, except during the commission of a ship, and that will not be interfered with at all under the new proposals. When a private of Marines returns from service to barracks, he is detailed to a company commanded by a captain he does not know. When he completes his time on shore, and goes to sea, he again serves under Marin officers who are strangers to him. Under the present system we have constantly at sea Marines under the control of naval officers, and bluejackets under the control of Marine officers. I think the noble Earl who spoke second quoted the fact that in the last ten years some 8,500 Marines have been annually borne on the books of His Majesty's ships, and of this number one-third have been serving on ships without any Marine officer on board. I do not know that any evil effect has resulted. If that is so, what is the objection to Marines being officered on shore by naval officers? The noble Viscount said we were striking at the vitality of the corps. I will venture to say that we are doing nothing of the kind. I cannot follow the noble Viscount's argument, nor can I accept his conclusion. I suggest that there is really nothing in this proposal that will in any way reduce the efficiency of the Marine corps as a whole, but the efficiency of the officers and their usefulness to the Navy will be, in my opinion, very largely increased.

It has been said that we propose to do away with the Marines. No one outside of Bedlam would dream of doing anything of the kind. The Marines bear a splendid record; we admire their brilliant services, and we know them to be as fine a corps of men as exists in any country. What we wish to do is to maintain and strengthen them by adapting their officers somewhat more to the modern fighting requirements of the Navy

Now, my Lords, I must say a word with regard to the engineer officers. Here, again, I think there is some misapprehension. It seems to be thought by some that an engineer officer requires the same training and the same apprenticeship as a skilled artificer or skilled workman. That is quite a delusion. Prolonged apprenticeship is necessary for the artificer to train eye and hand and muscle, and to give him the necessary practice, to enable him to do perfect and accurate work. A far shorter apprenticeship will enable the engineer officer, well trained as he will have been from youth, to judge between good and bad work, and to know how repairs should be properly carried out. An engineer officer needs to be a thorough judge of work, and of the essentials of mechanism. How are we training the future engineer officer for this? Before an engineer officer can have charge of the engines he will have spent a considerable part of four years at college, studying engineering subjects, and working in shops. Thirty per cent. of his three years midshipman time in engine-room watch-keeping, one year's special engineering course to study modern developments, and seven years practical engineering work on board ship. His training for executive duties will be the same as gunnery and torpedo lieutenants receive, and there has never been any complaint that these have been found incapable of carrying out their executive duties. Of His Majesty's battleships and first-class cruisers I am informed that 50 per cent. are commanded by captains who have been gunnery and torpedo lieutenants; that does not look as if their training for executive duties had failed. Engineer officers will have a training which will fit them to take their place beside gunnery and torpedo lieutenants, and there is not the shadow of a reason why the efficiency of the executive or the special branch should be diminished. On the contrary, there is every prospect of the standard of efficiency being materially raised in both cases. It may be thought that the proposals contained in this Memorandum have been made in haste. There is no truth whatever in the suggestion. The matters dealt with—important and far-reaching as they are—are the outcome of much thought and consideration for many years. We believed, when I was at the Admiralty—I believe to-day—that they will tend to strengthen and make more efficient than ever the great service of which we are all so proud.

*THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Lord TWEEDMOUTH): My Lords, I confess that the pride and satisfaction that I have in answering for the great Department of which I have the honour to be at the head, is not a little tempered by a sense of the heavy responsibility which I feel rests upon me. It is no small matter to be responsible to Parliament for the great Department which really controls the supreme power of this country, and I think that the course of the debate to-night has brought home to me this fact with full force.

I entered office under somewhat trying and unusual circumstances. For the last twenty-five years the Navy has been going through a great revolution in *personnel*, in tactics, in strategy, in ships; and this fact has been acknowledged by successive Boards of Admiralty, who have given full effect to great changes, and, as sequence to these great changes, they came to the conclusion that it was necessary also to make great changes in the method of entry and training of officers for the Navy. They came to the conclusion to adopt wthe plan which as so much discussed three years ago. I came into office two months ago and found this determination arrived at. I have been congratulated because I retained the old Board, who acted with my noble friend opposite. Retaining that Board, and considering it a proper body to advise me, I felt bound to pay the greatest respect to the resolutions they had arrived at after the most careful and serious consideration.

Both sides of the question have been clearly stated by the noble Earl who spoke second, and by the noble Viscount, Lord Goschen on the one side, and by my noble friend the late First Lord on the other. Those statements of the case will, I think, be read with eagerness. What I have to do to-night is to state the view that I take of the situation. This plan, this new arrangement, has been in operation now for only three years, and while the tree is growing it is not good to pull it up to look at its roots. My belief is that the proper course for us to take is to allow the tree to grow, to see what fruit it will bear, not neglecting it, but manuring, trimming, pruning, if necessary cutting it back, but watching it and giving it a fair trial.

Let me just briefly run through the education of a boy entering the Navy under this new system. The boy enters Osborne as near as possible at the age of thirteen. There he works for forty hours in the week, twenty-four and three-quarters hours in professional subjects, such as seamanship, navigation, practical engineering, mathematics, physics and chemistry, and for the remaining hours in general subjects. He stays there for two years, and then goes to Dartmouth. At Dartmouth he works forty-one and a quarter hours in the week, devoting twenty-eight hours to professional subjects and thirteen and a quarter to general subjects. Four years he passes at these two schools or colleges—institutions which I believe are models to every school in the world.

I have not seen Dartmouth myself, but I have most carefully watched the proceedings at Osborne. The staff, of course, is enormous. You have thirty-four masters on the civil side and you have a great number of naval officers on the disciplinary side, as well as a great number of petty officers and seamen who help the cadets in their laboratory work and in their studies in the workshops. These boys have the greatest care taken of them. It is a very different thing from what we were accustomed to when we were in the public schools. Learning is made very easy, and the boys pick up the knowledge imparted to them with extraordinary quickness and intelligence. Their chances for those four years are very great, and I am sure that at the end of that period nine boys out of ten will come out very accomplished young officers with a great deal more knowledge, both special and general, than the ordinary boy of sixteen or seventeen as he then would be. Then, after leaving Dartmouth, the lad goes on board a cruiser for six or seven months, where his education is carried on in special subjects as well as in general seamanship. After that he spends three years as a midshipman on board ship, and at the end of that period passes an examination, and for two years is a sub-lieutenant. Of those two years one is spent ashore and one afloat, but both under most careful supervision and training.

The young officer is then 22½ or 22 years of age. He has had every chance, and in most cases will be a very well equipped officer for his age. It is not till he has passed the examination for lieutenant, after all this training, that he becomes a specialist. When the young officer becomes a lieutenant he then specialises. It does not matter on what subject. He may be a navigator, he may be an engineer, he may take up gunnery or torpedo work. Depend upon it you will find all the best of these young men specialising in one subject or another.

During his time as lieutenant the specialised work will be continued, so that, whether it be one sort or another, you will find that these men will excel each in his department as much as we now find the torpedo and the gunnery specialists excel. Why, then, should this system of training not apply to the engineer officer also? I believe that many lieutenants will stick to particular subjects right on through their career, but if they show a particular aptitude for the command of a ship or for general executive work, depend upon it they will be brought back, either with the consent of their equals or by the orders of their superiors, and they will do good service. While I am ready to keep an open mind on the subject, I do think that there is not evidence sufficient to stop this experiment. We ought, therefore, to go on with it, in order to see what kind of officer will be produced in seven or eight years and then judge by the result of the experiment.

The Committee referred to by the noble Viscount was a Departmental Committee, and I have no objection to lay the Report on the table of the House if there is a wish shown to have it. As to the protection of our ports by searchlights and submarine mines, it is the fact that the submarine mining establishments have been handed over from the War Office to the Admiralty, and I understand that the searchlights are still kept in their position. The question of submarine mines is an argumentative one. It very often happens that your mine is as dangerous to yourselves as to your opponent. The Admiralty hope that the defence of our ports in future will be cared for by means of the new submarine boats. There has been a great deal of discussion about the possible changes in the coastguard. Nothing much has been done as yet Some of the smaller coastguard stations have been abolished, but no decision has been arrived at as to the force in general, and as far as I know there is no intention at the present moment to make any considerable change.

The object of the Admiralty in respect of the Royal Naval Reserve has been to secure the greatest amount of efficiency at the lowest possible cost. The old fashion of training the Naval Reserve was to scatter round the coast a number of batteries—I think there were thirty-three altogether—many of them equipped with obsolete guns. There were also nine drill ships, but the late Board came to the conclusion that it was far better to have the Reserve men thoroughly trained under modern conditions than to keep them under a system of different and costly training. The changes in the arrangement of the Fleet lent themselves to such a new system. On account of the new Reserve Fleet, with the nucleus ships, the Admiralty were provided with suitable vessels always ready round the coast to receive the Reserve men for training. It was accordingly arranged that the Royal Naval Reserve men now under engagement could, if they did not like to go to sea, fulfil the remainder of their number of years engagement at eight batteries and with three training ships conveniently placed round the coast where they might go for the time which elapsed between the new system and the end of their term of engagement. What we want to encourage is the coming forward of the men for training on board the Reserve ships.

The new system is this. The Reservist during the first year of his engagement goes for three months on board one of these ships. Every other year after that he goes for twenty-eight days training in a Reserve ship, choosing himself the month when he will be able to go on board. Thus the Reserve men have the advantage of practical training under such conditions as actual service to-day, with new guns, and of being able to see what service in a modern warship is like. I think it will be found that we shall thereby obtain a much more useful number of men in the Naval Reserve. From a monetary point of view, the new arrangement is better than the old one, for the men are provided with board and lodging. We have increased considerably the Royal Fleet Reserve. There has been a little falling off in the Royal Naval Reserve; but the total of the Royal Fleet and Naval Reserves together is fully as large as under the old conditions. We believe that the men obtained in the Royal Fleet Reserve will be extremely useful.

The noble Viscount asked me a Question with regard to short service. A very few men have as yet been enlisted under the short service conditions. It is believed, however, that there is a great deal of work in modern warships which can be done by men not of the first skill, and that good men can be got on short service able to do that work, while providing a considerable number for the Reserve. There is no intention of applying the short service to the skilled ratings or the higher ranks of the Navy. The men upon whom we shall most depend will be men of long service, on the same conditions as before.

I think I have touched on all the points raised. I can only say, in conclusion, that so far as I have the power of influencing the naval policy of the country, I shall endeavour to make it progressive and not aggressive, while I shall consider fully and attentively the views of naval officers and experts. I hope that in this work I shall have the assistance of the noble Viscount and others of his predecessors in office so as to help me through with the difficult task I have undertaken.

House adjourned at half-past Seven o'clock, to Thursday next, half past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Tuesday, 6th March, 1906.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS (STANDING ORDER 63 COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. Speaker laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, referred on the First Reading thereof, Standing Order No. 63 has been complied with, viz :—

Metropolitan Electric Supply Bill.

Ordered, that the Bill be read a second time.

London Southern Tramways Bill. Read a second time, and committed.

Uxbridge Gas Bill. Read a second time, and committed.

Metropolitan District Railway Bill (by Order); Metropolitan Railway Bill (by Order). Read a second time, and committed.

Midland Railway Bill (by Order). Second Reading deferred till to-morrow.

North Metropolitan Tramways Bill (by Order). Read a second time, and committed.

STANDING ORDERS.

Resolutions reported from the Select Committee :—

1. "That, in the case of the London Outer Circle Railway Bill, Petition for dispensing with Standing Order 128 in the case of the Petition of the 'London and India Docks Company,' against the Bill, the said Standing Order ought to be dispensed with."

2. "That, in the case of the Metropolitan Water Board Bill, Petition for dispensing with Standing Order 128 in the case of the Petition of the 'Marquess of Salisbury,' against the Bill, the said Standing Order ought to be dispensed with."

3. "That, in the case of the Romford and District Tramways, Petition for Bill, the Standing Orders ought to be dispensed with. That the parties be permitted to proceed with their Bill."

4. "That, in the case of the London United Tramways, Petition for Bill, the Standing Orders ought to be dispensed with. That the parties be permitted to proceed with their Bill, provided that the powers to construct the Tramways proposed to be authorised be struck out of the Bill. That the Committee on the Bill do report how far such Order has been complied with."

5. "That, in the case of the Heacham Water, Petition for Bill, the Standing Orders ought to be dispensed with. That the parties be permitted to proceed with their Bill."

Resolutions agreed to.

PETITIONS.

LICENSED PREMISES (HOURS OF CLOSING).

Petition from Hunslet, for alteration of law; to lie upon the Table.

UNEMPLOYED WORKMEN ACT, 1905.

Petition from Poplar, for alteration of law; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

PRIVATE LEGISLATION PROCEDURE (SCOTLAND) ACT, 1899.

Copy presented, of Report by the Chairman of Committees of the House of Lords and the Chairman of Ways and Means in the House of Commons, under The Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899, that they are of opinion that the Edinburgh Corporation, the Highland and Great North of Scotland Railways Amalgamation, and the Scottish Union and National Insurance Company Orders ought to be dealt with by Private Bill and not by Provisional Order, etc. [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 78.]

NATIONAL GALLERY, ETC., (SCOTLAND).

Copy presented, of Twelfth Annual Report to the Secretary for Scotland by the Commissioners and Trustees of the Board of Manufactures in Scotland, being for the year ending 30th September 1905 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

LICENSING ACT, 1904.

Copy presented, of Treasury Minute, dated 28th February 1906, directing that the "Compensation Fund (Licensing Act, 1904) Account" shall be audited by the Comptroller and Auditor General [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

BULGARIA (NEW CUSTOMS TARIFF) (INTERIM STATEMENT).

Copy presented, of Translation of the New Customs Tariff of Bulgaria, as modified by Commercial Conventions with the United Kingdom, Germany, France, and Italy [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

COAL EXPORTED.

Return ordered, "giving, for the year 1905, the export of coal from each port in the United Kingdom to each country abroad, together with summary statements showing the export of coal in every period of three months from the principal districts of the United Kingdom to the principal groups of foreign countries; and also showing the quantity of coal shipped in each port in the United Kingdom for ships' use on foreign voyages during like periods (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 112, of Session 1905)."—(*Mr. D. A. Thomas.*)

REDISTRIBUTION OF SEATS.

Copy ordered, "of the Report and Supplementary Report made by the Committee appointed in August, 1905, to inquire and report upon certain questions connected with a proposed Redistribution of Seats at Parliamentary Elections."—(*Mr. D. A. Thomas.*)

PARLIAMENT (MEETING, ETC.).

Return ordered, "showing dates of meeting and prorogation of Parliament in each session from the year 1808, and the duration of the Sittings of the House."—(*Mr. D. A. Thomas.*)

COLONIES (COLONIAL ACTS, ROYAL ASSENT).

Address for "Return of the names of Bills, since the date covered by the House of Commons Return, No. 362, of 1901, passed by both Houses of the Legislature in Colonies possessing responsible government, to which His Majesty has not given His Assent, and of Bills so passed with a Suspending Clause, under which the Act does not come into operation until proclaimed, in respect of which no such proclamation has been made."—(*Colonel Legge.*)

FOREIGN TRADE AND COMMERCE.

Return ordered, "of monthly accounts relating to the Trade and Commerce of certain Foreign Countries and British Possessions."—(*Mr. Lloyd-George*).

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Freeboard of British Ships.

MR. J. HAVELOCK WILSON (Middlesbrough): To ask the President of the Board of Trade whether his Department has agreed to and sanctioned any alteration in the freeboard assigned to British ships; whether the representatives of the seamen were consulted upon the subject as well as the shipowners; and whether he will state if it is his intention before such alteration shall come into operation to lay the particulars of the same upon the Table of the House so as to afford Members an opportunity to consider and discuss the same.

(*Answered by Mr. Lloyd-George.*) The Board have agreed to and sanctioned modifications of the freeboard tables, and, before doing so, consulted the corporations or associations for the survey or registry of shipping appointed for the purpose of approving and certifying the position of load lines as required by Section 438 (4) of the Merchant Shipping Act, 1894. No other associations have been consulted nor any representatives of shipowners. I shall be happy to supply my hon. friend with a copy as soon as the tables are printed.

Value of Imports from British Possessions —Home Competition.

LORD ROBERT CECIL (Marylebone, E.): To ask the President of the Board of Trade if he will state the total value of manufactured articles imported into this country from British Possessions during the years 1903, 1904, and 1905; how far these were similar to and in competition with articles produced in the United Kingdom; and whether this competition shows signs of increasing.

(*Answered by Mr. Lloyd-George.*) The values of the articles classed in the trade accounts as wholly or mainly manufactured, imported into the United Kingdom from British Possessions in 1903, 1904, and 1905 were £14,119,830, £14,577,602, and £15,940,765, respectively. Over three-quarters of these imports consisted of unwrought tin and copper, drugs and dry stuffs, undressed leather, and jute manufactures. The last two categories may be said to compete with the United Kingdom manufactures. Of these the imports of leather from British Possessions showed an increase, and of those of jute manufactures a decrease, in 1905.

Prices of and Import Duty on Sugar.

Mr. TOULMIN (Bury, Lancashire): To ask the President of the Board of Trade if he will state the average retail price, at intervals, of sugar in any convenient unit (1 lb. or 7 lb.) in London, Paris, or Berlin respectively from January 1903 to January 1906, and the amount of import duty in each country at the time.

(*Answered by Mr. Lloyd-George.*) If the hon. Member will move for a Return showing, with regard to London, Paris, and Berlin, the price of sugar and the duty levied thereon at 1st March, 1903, 1904, 1905, and 1906, on the lines of the Return No. 174 of 1905, I shall be happy to grant it.

Importation of Colonial and Foreign Store Cattle—Replies to Deputations.

Mr. WALROND (Devonshire, Tiverton): To ask the hon. Member for South Somerset, as representing the President of the Board of Agriculture, if he will issue, as a Parliamentary Paper, the reports of the official replies to deputations on the subject of importing Colonial or foreign store-cattle into this country.

(*Answered by Sir Edward Strachey.*) It would be unusual to adopt the course suggested by the hon. Member, but I think I could arrange to supply a few copies of the reports in question either to himself or to any other hon. Members specially interested in the subject.

Abolition of Corporal Punishment in Military Schools.

Mr. TOMKINSON (Cheshire, Crewe): To ask the Secretary of State for War what is the policy of the Government as regards corporal punishment in military prisons.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) The Army Council has decided that corporal punishment should be entirely abolished in military prisons, and the necessary Amendments to this effect of the Army Act will be included in the Army Annual Bill.

Transfer of Cost of Defences of Naval Dockyards to Navy Estimates.

Mr. BELLAIRS (Lynn Regis): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether his attention has been drawn to the Statement of Admiralty Policy, issued on 30th November, in which a protest is made against the Navy Estimates bearing any charges incurred on behalf of other departments; and whether he will take advantage of this policy to negotiate for the transfer of the cost of the shore defences of naval dockyards from the Army to the Navy Estimates.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) The question of the transfer of the responsibility for such defences to the Admiralty has been considered on previous occasions, and it has been always decided to leave matters unchanged, except in respect of the submarine mining defences. I do not propose, at the present moment, to re-open the general question. To transfer the cost of the defences without the responsibility would not apparently serve any good purpose.

Treatment of Barbados and Trinidad under the French Tariff.

Mr. O. C. PHILLIPPS (Pembroke and Haverfordwest): To ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he is aware that Barbados and Trinidad do not at present receive the same favourable terms under the French tariff as Jamaica; and whether he will take whatever steps may be necessary to secure for Barbados and Trinidad the same favourable treatment as Jamaica.

(*Answered by Mr. Churchill.*) The products of Jamaica are admitted into French territory at the minimum rate of duty under the terms of a convention signed on the 8th of August, 1902, and ratified on the 12th of August, 1903. The Governments of Barbados and Trinidad were consulted in 1900 as to the expediency of steps being taken to secure similar favourable treatment for their products, and intimated that they did not desire such action to be taken.

Pay and Pensions of Staff of Colonial Branch.

MR. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick): To ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether he will state who pays for the up-keep of the Colonial Audit Branch under the Controller and Auditor-General; how many of the officials in this branch are in receipt of pensions from Parliamentary funds, and whether these officials are in addition receiving full pay in their present positions.

(*Answered by Mr. McKenna.*) As the three Questions of which the hon. Member has given notice for 6th, 7th† and 14th March include matters which will be more conveniently answered together, I would ask him to allow me to reply to them at the same time. The Colonial Audit Branch does not stand on the same footing as ordinary departments of the Home Civil Service. All appointments to that branch, the bulk of the members of which serve abroad in various Colonies and Protectorates, are made by the Comptroller and Auditor-General, just as many similar Colonial appointments are made with the approval of the Secretary of State for the Colonies. The higher officers at present in the branch at headquarters in London were selected from the staff of the Exchequer and Audit Department. Candidates for appointment must satisfy the Comptroller and Auditor-General that they possess the requisite knowledge and ability for the due discharge of their duties and that they are within the limits of age which are fixed at from eighteen to twenty-six. Their physical fitness for service in the Colonies, including the West Coast of Africa, is ascertained by one of the medical advisers of the Colonial Office. Some of the clerks were originally in the Second Division of the Civil Service, but the majority of the candidates recently appointed have been selected from graduates of the universities. In some cases appointments have been made from officials already in the Colonial service. The total number of the branch, including native clerks and messengers abroad, is at the present time 104. The entire charge, both effective and non-effective, of the branch is borne by the various Colonies and Protectorates, whose accounts are audited by that branch. No appropriations-in-aid are received by the Exchequer and Audit Department for the housing, etc., of the branch, who are accommodated in the same building with the main office of the Exchequer and Audit Department. The superintendent of the branch and one of the clerks, in addition to their pay from Colonial funds, are in receipt of pensions from Imperial funds as late clerks in the Exchequer and Audit Department. These officials, on the reorganisation of that department, were at the special request of the Comptroller and Auditor-General, allowed by the Treasury to retire on pension in order that they might take up appointments in the Colonial Audit Branch, thus giving the Colonies the benefit of their experience. They are in receipt of personal salaries from Colonial funds, fixed with regard to the fact of their being in receipt of Imperial pensions. The Comptroller and Auditor-General is alive to the fact that there are certain anomalies in the constitution of the department, and has under consideration a scheme with the object of removing them.

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† To ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether the Colonial Audit Branch, under the Controller and Auditor-General, is paid for out of Parliamentary funds; and, if not, how much is the amount of appropriations in aid received by the Exchequer and Audit Department for the housing, etc., of this Colonial Audit Branch; and why this amount is not clearly stated in the Estimates.

Stamp Duty on Affidavits and Memorials in Ireland.

MR. VINCENT KENNEDY (Cavan, W.): To ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether he is aware that 10s. 6d. stamp duty is charged on affidavits or memorials in Ireland if sworn before a magistrate, and if the same be sworn before a Commissioner for Oaths the stamp duty is 13s. 6d. with Commissioner's fee in addition; and whether, in view of the confusion and inconvenience this difference of practice entails, the matter will have immediate attention.

(*Answered by Mr. McKenna.*) The stamp charges on the registration of memorials are made up of several items, of which the only one that varies by reason of the authority before whom an affidavit or declaration is sworn, is the duty of 2s, 6d., chargeable under the head of "Affidavit and Statutory Declaration" in the schedule to The Stamp Act, 1891. By No. 2 of the exemptions under that head, this duty of 2s. 6d. is not chargeable on an affidavit or declaration "required by law, and made before a justice of the peace." It is not very clear why the exemption was thus limited, and in any revision of the Stamp Acts the point might well be considered.

Value of British Exports to South Africa.

SIR HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield Central): To ask the President of the Board of Trade, if he can state the value of the British exports to South Africa from the time of the introduction of Chinese labour to 28th February, 1906, and particularly what was the value of the mining machinery exported from Sheffield and other centres of British staple trade.

(*Answered by Mr. Lloyd-George.*) The value of exports of British produce to British South Africa from the middle of the year 1904 to the end of 1905 was £24,951,326. The exports of mining machinery during the same period amounted to £404,041. The figures for the two first months of the present year are not at present available.

Value of Firearms and Ammunition Exported into the United Kingdom.

MR. VINCENT KENNEDY: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will state the number of firearms and amount of ammunition delivered in Scotland, Wales, and Ireland for the years 1900, 1901, 1902, 1903, 1904 and 1905, distinguishing the class of firearms and ammunition; and also the respective quantities, supplied under Government supervision, and otherwise.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Gladstone.*) I fear I cannot give this information. Figures exist showing the total quantity and value of arms, ammunition, and military and naval stores, imported into the United Kingdom in each of the six years in question, but those figures do not distinguish the quantities imported into England, Scotland, Wales and Irelandr espectively. No information exists, so far as I am aware, showing the total quantities of firearms and ammunition manufactured in the United Kingdom, though the quantities manufactured in Government factories could probably be given, if the hon. Member so desires.

Licensing Statistics.

MR. CHARLES ROBERTS (Lincoln): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he can now state or include in his forthcoming volume of licensing statistics a statement showing the number of new on-licences for the sale of intoxicating liquors, distinguishing ale-house licences, beer on-licences, and beer and wine on-licences, respectively, granted and confirmed in the years ending 5th April, 1903, 1904, 1905 and 1906.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Gladstone.*) The number of new on-licences granted in 1905 will be shown in detail in the volume in question. This volume is intended to deal with the figures for 1905, and I do not think that it would be advisable at this stage to delay and complicate it by introducing figures which have not been collected for this purpose.

House to House Hawking of Beer.

MR. T. HART-DAVIES (Fulham): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if his attention has been called to the practice of hawking beer from door to door, which of late has prevailed in many of the working-class districts of London; and whether he proposes, by legislation or otherwise, to take steps to prohibit the practice.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Gladstone.*) I am informed by the police that a practice has grown up, and widely prevails in working-class districts and elsewhere, by which retail orders for beer in jars and bottles are placed with brewers and publicans beforehand and complied with by house-to-house delivery on appointed days. The question of the legality of such transactions sometimes involves points of considerable intricacy, and has come before the High Court more than once; but the Board of Inland Revenue and the police take proceedings whenever it seems desirable, and have done so successfully from time to time. It is a matter which I will take into consideration in connection with licensing legislation when opportunity occurs.

Post Office Wages Committee—Position of Overseers.

Mr. ALDEN (Middlesex, Tottenham): To ask the Postmaster-General, in connection with the proposed Committee on Post Office servants, whether the class of overseers in provincial offices is to be regarded as belonging to the supervising and clerical force whose wages and position it is not intended should be inquired into by the Committee.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) The duties of overseers in provincial offices are, to a great extent, of a supervisory character, and it was not my intention to include them among the classes covered by the reference to the Committee.

Collecting of Rates in St. Georges in the East.

Mr. W. BENN (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): To ask the President of the Local Government Board, whether his attention has been drawn to the case of certain tenants of houses in Lowder Street, St. George's East, who have been imprisoned for rates due to the Stepney Borough Council, part of which rates had already been paid to the landlord with his rent; and whether he will consider the advisability of giving the borough council power to proceed against the landlord instead of the occupier in cases where the former is receiving a rent which includes the rates due upon the houses.

(*Answered by Mr. John Burns.*) If the borough council made an order for the rating of the owners of small hereditaments in which dwelling houses are included, instead of the occupiers, the rate could be recovered from the owner. But the borough council are not disposed to adopt this course, as they think that it would not prove financially economical. I understand that in the case referred to in the Question the owner of the houses was not liable to the payment of the rate, that the rate could only be recovered from the occupiers, and that they were entitled to deduct the rate from the rent due or accruing to the owner, but that they failed to do so.

Tuberculosis and Cattle Disease.

Mr. CAIRNS (Newcastle-on-Tyne): To ask the hon. Member for South Somerset, as representing the President of the Board of Agriculture, whether he will furnish a Return showing the number of cases of scheduled diseases of cattle reported in the United Kingdom for each year from 1896 to the present year inclusive, stating the specific diseases separately, also the number of cases of tuberculosis; similarly, the cases of the same diseases reported in cattle imported from the Dominion of Canada during the same years, and the number of cattle imported; and whether he can furnish the Returns of the Dominion Government as to the same diseases in the herds of Canada.

(*Answered by Sir Edward Strachey.*) I am making inquiries as to the extent to which we can give effect to the wishes of my hon. friend, and I will communicate personally with him on the subject.

Fines Levied on Renewal of Leases in the Metropolis.

Mr. BILLSON (Staffordshire, N.W.): To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he can give the amount of fines on renewal of leases assessed to Income Tax in the Metropolis during the years

1900–1905 respectively, under The Income Tax Act, 1842 (Schedule A, No. II., 5); and if he can say what portion, if any, of such fines have been discharged by the Commissioners from the profits liable to assessment, on the ground that they have been applied as productive capital.

(*Answered by Mr. Asquith.*) There are no statistics of the amounts of fines levied on renewal of leases in the Metropolis. It may, however, be stated that the amounts of such fines are almost invariably applied as productive capital and therefore obtain exemption from Income Tax under the proviso to Rule No. II., 5, of Schedule A in the Act of 1842.

Partition of Bengal—Increased Cost of Administration.

MR. C. J. O'DONNELL (Newington, Walworth): To ask the Secretary of State for India, if he will state the extra cost due to the partition of Bengal and the consequent duplication of civil establishments, distinguishing between the total of salaries payable to Europeans and those payable to Natives of India.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Morley.*) A rough estimate of the extra cost of establishments will be found at page 242 of the recently issued Blue-book [Cd. 2746]. To this estimate must be added, vide page 246, the cost of a second member of the Board of Revenue, and a Commissioner for the Surma Valley. The total extra cost will therefore be between Rs.9 and 10 lakhs annually. The details of the new establishments required are now being worked out. As regards the second part of the Question, the Indian Civil Service is open to all subjects of His Majesty without distinction of race. There are several Indian members of that Service now serving in Bengal, some of whom will probably obtain posts in the new province. In addition, a certain number of the appointments listed as open to the Provincial Service of Bengal will be transferred. Until details are settled I am unable to give exact figures.

MR. C. J. O'DONNELL: To ask the Secretary of State for India if he will say what expenditure has been incurred at Dacca in establishing a new headquarters under the recent partition scheme.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Morley.*) The estimate of the cost of buildings, including land, for the new headquarters at Dacca given by the Government of India in August last was about Rs.10 lakhs, and in addition temporary buildings costing Rs.1,85,000 were to be erected by the end of the year. I understand that the latter have already been completed. I am unable to say what amount has been spent up to date on the permanent buildings, but I observe, from a notification published in the Gazette, that a large area of land has already been appropriated for them.

Irish Firms and Drug Contracts for Irish Unions.

MR. FIELD: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that, owing to the recent action of the Local Government Board, about three-fourths of the tenders for drugs and medicines to Irish unions are necessarily supplied by English firms of wholesale druggists; will he say whether Irish firms are allowed to tender for similar contracts in England; and whether he will take the necessary steps to enable Irish firms to tender for supplies on equal terms in both countries.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) I am informed that boards of guardians have not yet undertaken the consideration of contracts for drugs for the next financial year. The proportion of the contracts secured by English firms last year was about one-third. So far as the Local Government Board for Ireland are aware, there is nothing to prevent Irish firms from tendering for similar contracts in England upon equal terms with English firms.

MR. FIELD: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that about three-fourths of the medicines required for the Irish Poor Law service are now supplied by English firms who do not contribute to Irish rates, although these medicines were formerly supplied exclusively by Irish manufacturing wholesale druggists; will he say whether Irish firms are prevented from tendering for similar contracts in England; and whether, as President of the Local Government Board for Ireland, he will see that Irish boards of guardians are allowed full discretion as regards these contracts in future without the risk of losing recoupment, as provided under the Medical Charities Act.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) As stated in reply to the preceding Question, one-third of the drug contracts, and not three-fourths, was obtained by an English firm last year. The firm in question has only recently competed for Irish medicine contracts. As regards the latter part of the Question, it must be remembered that one-half of the cost of these medicines is defrayed from public funds. It is the duty of the guardians to obtain the best return for the money of the ratepayers, whose trustees they are; and similarly it is incumbent on the Local Government Board to see that no unnecessary charge is placed on public funds. Moreover, any attempt to confine tenders to Irish firms might have the effect of prejudicing Irish tenders for various articles from being accepted in England.

Prosecution of Mrs. Regan—Absence from Duty of Mr. Mullane.

MR. FLYNN (Cork, N.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that Mr. T. Mullane, national teacher, of Dromahane, Mallow, has frequently attended petty sessions, quarter sessions, and assizes, in connection with the prosecution of Mrs. Regan, widow, an evicted tenant; and will he say whether Mr. Mullane obtained permission from the National Commissioners for these absences from his duty, which involve loss to the pupils of these schools; and whether the Commissioners will make representations on this matter to this national teacher.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) I am informed by the Board of National Education that Mr. Mullane was absent from duty on nine days, at various times between November, 1903, and October, 1904, in connection with litigation in which he was engaged, concerning land formerly in possession of Mrs. Regan. The Commissioners' permission in the case of occasional absence for reasonable cause is not necessary, the matter being within the discretion of the manager of the school. The Commissioners made due inquiry at the time into the absences referred to, and decided that action on their part was unnecessary. The inspector's Reports upon the school are satisfactory.

Purchase of Grazing Land at Gloshpatrick

DR. AMBROSE (Mayo, W.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the Congested Districts Board purchased, about four years ago, from the Earl of Lucan a grazing farm at Gloshpatrick, near Westport, county Mayo, and that the tenants have been paying rent to the Board for the past two years; could he give any reason why the Board has not up to the present striped this land amongst the tenants who live on small holdings, and for whose benefit it was purchased; whether any arrangement has been come to by any officials of the Board with a grazier, named Patrick McGreal whereby McGreal is to get the best portion of the arable land and a part of the mountain; if so, who are the officials who made this deal, and whether the Board was made aware of its terms before it was concluded; and, if no deal has been made with McGreal, who has plenty of land already, will he use his influence with the Board to prevent the tenants being deprived of the chance of enlargement of their holdings by having this land divided amongst them.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*). The Bingham estate, of which the farm in question forms part, became vested in the Congested Districts Board on 12th May, 1905, and prior to that date the Board had no power to deal with it. Mr. McGreal has been, since 1881, yearly tenant of the farm referred to, which consists largely of mountain land. In consideration of his surrendering a portion of this farm to the Board for the enlargement of adjacent small holdings and for the purposes of migration, the Board have arranged to sell him the remainder, including the house. It is not the fact that Mr. McGreal is to have the best portion of the arable land. Of the 140 acres of such land contained in the farm 120 acres are coming into possession of the Board for the purposes mentioned. Arrangements for the division of the lands, with a view to the enlargement of small holdings and facilitating migration, are in progress.

War Office Contracts for Chairs.

Mr. HERBERT (Buckinghamshire, Wycombe): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether he is aware that an order for 700 chairs was recently placed in Wycombe; that the price necessitated such chairs being made by machinery, and that machine-made chairs are unsatisfactory in quality and durability; and whether he will insert in any future contracts for chairs a provision that they shall be hand-made, and that the rate of wages paid under such contract shall be not less than the trade union rate.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) The War Department has no desire to give preference to either hand-made or machine-made chairs, but my hon. friend may rest assured that the usual precaution will be taken to ensure that supplies are in accordance with the terms of the contract. The customary clause requiring the payment of the current rate of wage for competent workmen in the district is one of the conditions of the contract.

Promotion of Lieutenants to Captaincies—in the Royal Engineers.

Mr. ARTHUR LEE (Hampshire, Fareham): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether he will renew the tentative arrangement, made two years ago, under which the qualifying service for promotion from lieutenant to captain in the Royal Engineers was reduced from eleven to nine years, which arrangement, if not renewed, will expire on the 31st instant.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) This matter is now under consideration and I hope that a final decision will be arrived at without delay.

Army—Transfers to the Reserve—Civil Employment under Government.

Sir. C. HILL (Shrewsbury): To ask the Secretary of State for War, whether he will lay upon the Table a Return showing the number of men in the Regular Army who have been transferred to the Reserve, or discharged since the 31st of March, 1905, and the number of those men for whom civil employment has been found under Government, by the various societies established for the purpose of finding employment for discharged soldiers, or by their own private endeavours; and further how many soldiers discharged since the above date are supported by the rates.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) The information on this subject for the year ended 30th September, 1905, will be found in the Annual Report of the Director of Recruiting recently presented to the House. There are no figures available to give a Return up to the present date. As regards the last part of the Question the information could only be obtained by a special Return called for from each county, the details of which would be difficult to secure accurately.

Sub-Target Rifle Machine.

Sir C. HILL: To ask the Secretary of State for War whether any experiments ments have been made in the regular or auxiliary forces with a recent invention known as the sub-target rifle machine; and, if so, with what results.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) A sub-target rifle machine is now under trial.

Supposed Disbandment of Ten Battalions of Regulars.

Sir C. HILL: To ask the Secretary of State for War whether the effect of the disbandment of ten battalions of the Regular Army, commencing on April 1st next, will be that the cadres will cease to exist when the operation is completed.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) There is no foundation whatever for the Report that ten battalions of the Regular Army are to be disbanded, commencing on the 1st April next, or any other date.

Free Postages and Free Railway Tickets for Members of Colonial Legislatures.

Mr. FIELD: To ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he is aware that in Canada during session the Members of Parliament are allowed to send all correspondence and Blue-books free of postage charges; and whether, under a special Act, Members of Parliament obtain a free pass over all railways in the Dominion, which includes free railway travelling upon railways that are now owned by the State; and whether he can give particulars in regard to free postage and railway travelling accorded to members of the legislature in other British Colonies.

(*Answered by Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman.*) It is the fact that in Canada, during the session, Members of the Dominion Parliament are allowed to send letters and other mailable matter free of Canadian postage charges, and, under a special Act, have a free pass over all railways in Canada. A special inquiry would have to be made to obtain the particulars asked for with regard to other British Colonies.

Royal Commission on Reclamation of Foreshores etc.—Personnel and Terms of Reference.

Mr. J. F. MASON (Windsor): To ask the First Lord of the Treasury when he will be in a position to announce the personnel and terms of reference of the Royal Commission on Reclamation of Foreshores, Afforestation, etc.

(*Answered by Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman.*) I cannot at present make any definite announcement on this subject.

Procedure—Limits of Discussion.

Mr. ASHTON (Bedfordshire, Luton): To ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether in the terms of reference to the proposed Committee on the Rules of Procedure he will include such questions as a limit to the length of speeches, and the adoption of some method by which discussion on Amendments to Bills before the House may be concentrated on the most important Amendments.

(*Answered by Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman.*) I can only refer my hon. friend to the terms of the appointment of the Committee.

Canals Commission — Suggested Representative of the Thames Conservancy.

Mr. BARNARD (Kidderminster): To ask the First Lord of the Treasury if he will consider the advisability of adding a member of the Thames Conservancy to the Royal Commission appointed to inquire into the Canals and Inland Navigations of the United Kingdom, as the Regent's Canal, the Grand Junction, and half a dozen other important canals join the River Thames, which is controlled by the Conservancy Board.

(*Answered by Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman.*) The canal interest is already fully represented, and I am not prepared to accept the hon. Member's suggestion.

Canals Commission—Agricultural Representatives.

Mr. COURTHOPE (Sussex, Rye): To ask the first Lord of the Treasury whether, in view of the importance of canal communication to agriculture, he will take steps to appoint representatives of the agricultural industry as additional members of the Royal Commission on Canals and Waterways, in order to secure the adequate representation of the agricultural industry upon the Commission.

(*Answered by Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman.*) I am not prepared to propose any further names for this Commission, which is already large and representative, and includes several members who are much interested in agriculture.

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

Royal Yacht—Officers' Promotions.

Mr. BELLAIRS (Lynn Regis): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether the Government intend to abolish the system of royal yacht promotions; and whether he will state how many commanders, lieutenants, and sub-lieutenants have received special promotion from the royal yachts during the ten years ending December 31st, 1905.

THE SECRETARY TO THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. EDMUND ROBERTSON, Dundee): The following special promotions from His Majesty's yacht have been made in the last ten years: three commanders to captain; ten lieutenants to commander; thirty sub-lieutenants to lieutenant. It is not proposed to make any change in the system.

Admiralty Orders for the Thames.

MR. CARLILE (Hertfordshire, St. Albans): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether, seeing that the vessels now in course of completion include twelve at Glasgow and only three on the Thames it is proposed that at least one of the new armoured ships about to be ordered shall be laid down on the Thames.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: I am not in a position to make any statement on this subject at present.

Naval Draughtsmen.

MR. CARLILE: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty what is the cause of the reduction of the number of draughtsmen from 397 to 302, a reduction of nearly 24 per cent., on the figures in the Estimate for 1905–6; and whether it is proposed to discharge the ninety-five draughtsmen or to employ them in other capacities.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: A reduction of forty-six draughtsmen is due to the introduction of a new system of employing women tracers in the dockyards. The reduction of the remaining 49 is the result of a decrease in drawing work generally. The men affected will not be discharged, but will revert to other duties.

Soldiers in Civil Prisons.

MR. CLAUDE HAY (Shoreditch, Hoxton): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War if he will give the particulars of the offences for which sixty-seven soldiers are now undergoing punishment in civil prisons without such imprisonment carrying with it discharge from the Army.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. HALDANE, Haddingtonshire): The particulars of the offences are as follows:—

Stealing	27
Malicious damage	1
Larceny	7
Obscene language	2
Assaulting female	2
Assault	10
Absent from Militia training	2
Attempted suicide	1
Bigamy	1
Debtor	1
Drunk and disorderly	1
Indecency	3
Ill-treating donkey	1
Forgery	1
False answer on attestation	2
Fraudulent enlistment	2
	64†

†I may add that the total number should have been given as 64 and not as 67.

MR. LEA (St. Pancras, E.): Will the right hon. Gentleman lay down a ruling that no soldier having once been committed to a civil prison shall again be allowed to wear the uniform?

*MR. HALDANE: That requires consideration.

Recruiting Report.

MR. HOBHOUSE (Bristol, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he is aware that the annual report upon recruiting, summarised in the *Westminster Gazette* on March 1st, 1906, was not obtainable in the Vote Office on that day; and whether he will take steps to ensure that Parliamentary Papers will be communicated to the House at least as soon as they are given to the Press.

*MR. HALDANE: I am informed by the printers that the supply of this Report was delivered to the Vote Office at 8 a.m. on the 1st instant. I am therefore unable to understand why my hon. friend was unable to obtain a copy. The arrangements for distribution to the Press are not in my hands.

Pietermaritzburg Garrison.

MR. HAROLD COX (Preston): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War what will be the annual cost of the battalion of troops to be stationed at Pietermaritzburg at the request of the Natal Government, including due allowance for the cost of training the troops, and for their reserve pay; and what contribution the Natal Government propose to make to this cost.

MR. HALDANE: The question of the force, if any, to be stationed at Pietermaritzburg is under consideration, and I am not in a position to make any statement at present.

Natal Boundaries.

MR. CONOR O'KELLY (Mayo, N.): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether before making any changes in the government of the Transvaal, it is intended to make inquiries into the annexation to Natal of Vryheid, Utrecht, and Wakkerstroom.

* THE UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. CHURCHILL, Manchester, N.W.): His Majesty's Government cannot undertake to revoke the solemn and deliberate act of policy by which these districts were under the late Government annexed to Natal.

Chinese Coolie Licences for the Witwatersrand.

MR. WALSH (Lancashire, Ince): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he would be willing to appoint or recommend the appointment of a small Committee to ascertain what urgent or exceptional circumstances, if any, prevailed in the Witwatersrand previous to the issue of the licences of November and December, 1905, and to report at as early a date as possible.

*MR. CHURCHILL: The Lieutenant-Governor of the Transvaal exercised, as he had on previous occasions, the discretion vested in him as to granting licences; which he was entitled to do so long as no definite instructions on this point were given to him by the Secretary of State through the Governor. His Majesty's Government while not able to regard the transaction with pleasure, feel that the responsibility and blame properly belongs to the late Administration, who failed to indicate any definite limit to the Chinese experiment either in point of time or numbers, and in these circumstances the Secretary of State does not think that any useful purpose would be served by such an inquiry.

British Indian Subjects in South Africa.

MR. CLAUDE HAY (Shoreditch, Hoxton): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies if he will inform the House what representations are being made to Natal or the Cape Colony with regard to the *status* of British-Indian subjects in those Colonies; and if it is proposed to press the claim of British-Indian subjects for equal rights as regards tenure of land and commercial facilities.

*MR. CHURCHILL: No fresh representations are at present being made. British Indians are not unequally affected by the general law of the Cape or of Natal in respect of holding land or of trading, but some municipalities have power to impose commercial restrictions.

Transvaal Government Officials.

MR. CLAUDE HAY: I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies what number of officials will be recalled on the establishment of responsible government in the Transvaal.

*MR. CHURCHILL: The establishment of responsible government will not necessarily involve the retirement from office of any officers beyond those members of the Executive Council whose offices become political.

Importation of Chinese Coolies.

*MR. STAVELEY HILL: I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies if he will lay upon the Table of the House the estimates which caused his Department to consider that the continued importation of Chinese coolies was justifiable, in view of the expense involved by stopping it.

*MR. CHURCHILL: No, Sir. I think it would be undesirable to lay estimates of claims hypothetical upon a contingency which has been avoided even if they existed in a definite form. But they do not exist, and therefore the Secretary of State is not prepared to lay them.

Mr. Boland's Charges.

MR. DUNN (Cornwall, Camborne): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether his attention has been called to the fact that the evidence in support of the alleged untruthfulness of the last paragraph of Mr. Boland's communication to the *Morning Leader* (vide No. 14, Cd. 2819), is an extract from the *Transvaal Leader*, published thirty-one days after Mr. Boland's communication was written, and nine days after it was published; and whether, having regard to this fact, he will ask for an extract from any Transvaal newspaper referring to the outrage in question, published prior to the date upon which Mr. Boland wrote (14th August, 1905) or prior to the date of the publication of such communication (6th September, 1905).

* MR. CHURCHILL: The hon. Member is fully entitled to call attention to this fact. I will inquire whether previous notice had been taken in the Press of the outrage in question. But having regard to the heavy charges involved in telegraphing to South Africa and the pressing need of public economy, I hope the hon. Gentleman will allow me to make the inquiries by despatch.

Arrests of Natives in Natal.

MR. HAROLD COX, (Preston): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether his attention has been called to the arrest of a large number of natives by the Colonial authorities in Natal, and whether His Majesty's Government will take steps to secure a proper trial for these subjects of His Majesty before any punishment is inflicted upon them?

* MR. CHURCHILL: His Majesty's Government do not consider that they could properly interfere with the responsibility of the Colonial Government in this matter. There is no reason to anticipate that these natives will not receive proper trial.

South African Imports of Coolies.

MR. WALROND (Devonshire, Tiverton): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies on what date the next shipload of Chinese coolies is expected to arrive in South Africa.

* MR. CHURCHILL: I cannot tell at present when the next shipload will arrive.

Cape Colony Disfranchised Voters.

MR. CONOR O'KELLY: I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether, as the biennial registration of voters in the Cape Colony will take place early in 1907, the 10,000 Colonists disfranchised in the latter months of 1902 for a period of five years for having taken part in the war cannot have their names restored to the register until 1909, after the election of the new House of Assembly; and whether any steps will be taken to prevent this extension of the term of disfranchisement.

* MR. CHURCHILL: The matter is one for the consideration of the Government of the Cape Colony, which, as the hon. Gentleman is aware, enjoys full powers of responsible Government.

Transvaal Civil Servants and Responsible Government.

MR. CONOR O'KELLY: I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies if he will say whether the conferring of responsible government on the Transvaal will adversely affect the members of the Civil Service, including magistrates, teachers, and police, now employed there; and whether, before their engagement, these officials asked for or were given any guarantees that their position would be unaffected by any changes that might be made in the government of the Colony.

* MR. CHURCHILL: As in the case of other Colonies upon which responsible Government has been conferred, the interests of the public servants of the Transvaal will have to be entrusted to the honour and justice of the new Government. No such pledges have been or could have been given by His Majesty's Government.

The Boers and the New Transvaal Constitution.

MR. O'DOWD (Sligo, S.): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether it is intended, before finally deciding on the responsible Government Constitution for the Transvaal, to ask Lord Selborne to confer with Boer representatives with the object of ascertaining the views on this subject of the Boer people generally.

*MR. CHURCHILL: Lord Selborne has already been in communication with the Boer leaders as well as with other political parties on the subject, and His Majesty's Government are fully alive to the importance of ascertaining the views of all sections of the population.

Repatriation of Chinese Coolies.

MR. CONOR O'KELLY: I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the number of Chinese coolies in the compounds in South Africa will be immediately reduced by 40 per cent. as a result of the decision of the Imperial Government to repatriate those coolies desiring to return to China at the public expense; and if he will say what steps are being taken to inform the coolies of the decision of the Imperial Government.

*MR. CHURCHILL: The time has not yet arrived for taking steps to inform the coolies, and meanwhile it is not possible to say what number of coolies will desire to return to China as a result of the decision of His Majesty's Government. The matter is being expedited, and I trust a definite announcement will not be long delayed.

Australian Commonwealth and Old Age Pensions.

MR. JOHN O'CONNOR (Kildare, N.): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia has issued a Commission to inquire into the subject of old age pensions; whether such Commission has made a Report; and will the Colonial Department issue the same, if any, to the Members of this House.

*MR. CHURCHILL: I understand that a Commission appointed by the Commonwealth Government on the subject of old age pensions has recently issued its Report, but the Report has not yet reached this country. I will place copies in the Library of the House as soon as they arrive.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: Will the right hon. Gentleman place on the Table of the House a report on the working of old age pensions in such colonies as they have been established?

*MR. CHURCHILL: I must ask for notice of that Question.

Sir Frederick Darley and Irish Home Rule.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether his attention has been directed to the correspondence between Sir Frederick Darley, Lieutenant-Governor of New South Wales, and His Eminence Cardinal Moran, the Cardinal Archbishop of Sydney, in which Sir Frederick Darley admits and reiterates a statement attributed to him, to which the Cardinal directed his attention, that the Home Rule movement in Australia was for an object which he looked on not only as disloyal, but also as one that causes unrest and works untold misery to Ireland; and whether, having regard to the position of Sir Frederick Darley as Lieutenant-Governor or Acting Governor of New South Wales, and as such the representative of the Crown, holding that position by appointment of the Imperial Government, expressions of partisan feeling on questions of Party politics are consonant with the dignity of his office or in accordance with the practice observed by Imperial Officers in the Colonies of refraining from participation in the arena of Party warfare; and whether any, and, if so, what intimation of the impropriety of his language will be conveyed to Sir Frederick Darley from the Imperial Government.

*MR. CHURCHILL: My attention has been drawn to the correspondence to which the hon. Member refers. It appears that the statement made by Sir

Frederick Darley on the subject of Home Rule was originally made in a private letter. The Secretary of State is not possessed of sufficient information as to the circumstances in which this letter was made public to enable him to form an opinion upon the incident as a whole. It is generally recognised to be undesirable that Officers of State representing the Crown should associate themselves publicly with controversial statements upon matters of Party politics.

Sokoto Punitive Expedition.

*Mr. STAVELEY HILL (Staffordshire, Kingswinford): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies if he will state what reinforcements are to be sent for the punitive expedition in Sokoto.

*Mr. CHURCHILL: Two hundred and fifty native troops of the West African Frontier Force have been sent as a precautionary measure into Northern Nigeria from the neighbouring colony of Lagos. It is not anticipated that any further reinforcements will be required.

Relief of the Education Rates.

Mr. CLAUDE HAY: I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer if he proposes to make special grants of money towards educational purposes in such places as West Ham.

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Asquith, Fife, E.): I am unable to make any statement on this subject at present.

Coal Duty—Cost of Collection.

Mr. D. A. THOMAS (Merthyr Tydvil): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer if he can state approximately the cost of collection of the coal duty during the financial year ending March 31st, 1905; and the net amount of revenue realised by the duty in the same period.

Mr. ASQUITH: The net amount of revenue realised by the coal duty during the financial year ended March 31st, 1905, was £2,052,774. As the same officers are engaged in the collection of the coal duty and other Customs duties, it is impossible to ascertain even approximately, what portion of the general cost of collection is attributable to this particular duty. The introduction of the corn, sugar and coal duties taken together involved an increase of 444 persons and an additional expense for pay and allowances, travelling, clothing and law charges of £57,600 per annum.

Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN (Worcestershire, E.): Could the right hon. Gentleman state how many of those officers he would be able to dispense with if the coal duty alone were removed?

Mr. ASQUITH: No, Sir; I could not. It is almost impossible to ascertain because the same officers are employed in the collection both of the coal and the sugar tax.

Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: I assume that the same officers being employed for both duties, the right hon. Gentleman would not be able to dispense with the services of any of them if the coal duty alone were repealed.

Mr. ASQUITH: No, Sir. That is an assumption the right hon. Gentleman must not make.

Vacant Crown Lands

Mr. WILLIAM RUTHERFORD (Liverpool, West Derby): On behalf of the hon. Member for the Everton Division of Liverpool, I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether he is aware that there are 70,092 acres of agricultural land in twenty-three counties of England now let by the Commissioners of Woods and Forests at an average rental of 21s. 6d. per acre, together with sundry vacant farms in Cambridgeshire, Cheshire, and other counties; and whether he will give instructions that all vacant lands and all lands suitable for farming purposes, as they fall vacant, of the above 70,092 acres shall be placed at the disposal of the county councils in which they are respectively situate, or of the adjacent cities, for the purpose of forming small holdings to bring the people back to the land, or for the purpose of use by the distress Committees for giving labour to the unemployed, rent in all cases being charged and collected at existing rates, and particularly that the lands in Cheshire should be made available for the county council of Cheshire and the adjoining cities of Liverpool, Manchester, and Chester.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. McKENNA, Monmouthshire, N.): The Commissioner of Woods will be ready to entertain applications from county and other councils to become tenants, at reasonable rents and subject to usual conditions, of agricultural lands that may from time to time be in hand. I may add that negotiations in which my hon. friend the Member for Newmarket is I believe interested are now in progress with reference to the taking of a farm at Burwell for the purpose of small holdings. There are no such lands in hand in Cheshire at present.

Electoral Pressure on Workmen Voters.

MAJOR RENTON (Lincolnshire, Gainsborough): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been called to the fact that it is alleged that many workmen have been dismissed on account of the votes they are presumed to have given at the recent general election; and whether he is prepared to advise any alteration in or strengthening of the law to prevent such action in the future.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. GLADSTONE, Leeds, W.): My attention has not been called to the allegations to which the hon. Member refers. If particulars of such cases can be given I shall be prepared to consider the question whether any action is necessary or practicable.

Chinese Immigration into Liverpool.

MR. WILLIAM RUTHERFORD: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been called to the continually increasing importation of Chinese into Liverpool, who mostly arrive as members of steamship crews, and to the industries which they take away from British labour; and whether he would be disposed to take any steps in the matter.

*MR. GLADSTONE: I am not in possession of any information upon this matter other than that which the hon. Member has kindly furnished me. If the hon. Member will lay further detailed information before me I will give it my consideration.

MR. WILLIAM RUTHERFORD: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that thirty Chinese were brought up for offences one day last week?

*MR. GLADSTONE: The hon. Member himself supplied me with information to that effect. If the Chinese offend against the law of course they are subject to the Aliens Act and can be dealt with accordingly.

Alien Prisoners at the Clerkenwell Sessions.

MR. WILLIAM RUTHERFORD: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been called to the fact that at the recent Clerkenwell Sessions ten aliens were sentenced to terms of imprisonment, amounting in the aggregate to thirty-two years of penal servitude and several years of hard labour, and that the construction put by the authorities on Section 3 (1) of the Aliens Act appears to preclude such convicted aliens being immediately deported, thereby causing expense to the country, amounting at £50 each to £1,600; and whether he is prepared to propose some remedy.

*MR. GLADSTONE: Yes, Sir. I have received a large number of recommendations for expulsion in cases where the courts have thought right to impose considerable sentences of imprisonment or penal servitude. It is a matter for the discretion of the court whether they recommend expulsion in addition to or in lieu of the sentence. Where an alien has committed a crime deserving of a long sentence of imprisonment or of penal servitude it would not be right to relieve him of this punishment merely because he is to be sent back to his own country; and if foreign criminals knew that they could come to England and commit crime with no worse consequence than that of being sent home at the public expense, I doubt whether there would be any decrease in the amount of alien crime in the United Kingdom or even of the expense occasioned by it.

Police Discipline—Infliction of Fines.

Mr. SCOTT (Ashton-under-Lyne): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will take steps to stop disciplinary fines being imposed on policemen.

*Mr. GLADSTONE: Power is given by statute to the Watch Committees of boroughs and the chief constables of counties to punish misconduct in policemen by fine as well as by other forms of punishment. The power seems to me to be a reasonable one and I am not prepared to take steps to put an end to it.

Aliens Act—Rejections.

Mr. J. R. MACDONALD (Leicester): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he can state the total number of immigrants rejected under the provisions of the Aliens Act, differentiating between those rejected after appeal and without appeal; also the number arriving from Russia, and the number of these rejected; and whether he would state what is the nature of proof required to establish the fact that an immigrant is a political refugee.

*Mr. GLADSTONE: The figures of rejections for February are still being worked out, but I hope to be able to give them every shortly. In January, as I stated in answer to a similar question on the 1st instant, eighty-six alien immigrants were refused leave to land on appeal, and three did not appeal from the refusal of the immigration officer; total, eighty-nine. Owing to the number of alien passengers landing in the United Kingdom it has not been possible yet with the staff at my disposal to distinguish all the nationalities and extract the numbers of those who are Russians. For the moment I can only say that of the eighty-nine persons from whom leave to land was withheld in January, fifty-six were of Russian nationality; but I should like to add that only two of these came direct from Russian ports. I am making inquiry of the several Immigration Boards on the point raised in the last sentence of the hon. Member's Question.

Chinese Sailors on British Ships.

Mr. WILLIAM RUTHERFORD: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether his attention has been called to the fact that certain British steamships using the port of Liverpool are manned by Chinese, to the exclusion of British labour; and whether he would be disposed to take any steps in the matter.

The PRESIDENT of the BOARD of TRADE (Mr. Lloyd-George, Carnarvon Boroughs): Yes, Sir, and I admit the importance of the question referred to by the hon. Member. The number of foreigners in the British Mercantile Marine who cannot understand the English language is a matter of grave concern, and, in connection with the Shipping Bill to be shortly introduced, I am considering whether any palliative can be applied.

Mr. JOYCE (Limerick): Is it not the fault of the British shipowner that these foreigners are employed?

Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.): Because they accept low wages.

Mr. WILLIAM RUTHERFORD: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that my Question relates solely to Chinese labourers on British merchant ships?

Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE: And I have answered the hon. Member's Question.

Mr. JOYCE: Are not Chinese foreigners?

Railway Servants—Hours of Duty.

*Mr. BELL (Derby): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade if he can state the number of cases of engine-drivers, firemen, guards, shunters, and signalmen employed on the railways in England and Wales, Scotland, and Ireland respectively, who had been on duty for thirteen, fourteen, fifteen, sixteen, seventeen, and eighteen hours and upwards per day for the month of March, 1905, and the total number employed in each of those grades.

Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE: I have no information of the nature desired as to shunters, but particulars of the hours worked by the other classes of railway men referred to, and the numbers employed, will be found in a Return (Command Paper 2781) circulated in December last.

*Mr. BELL: Can the right hon. Gentleman say why the totals are not included in the Return to which he refers? It is done in other Returns.

Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE: If the hon. Member will give notice of a Question I will look into the matter.

British Shareholders in South African Mines.

Sir HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade if he caused the registers of shareholders at Somerset House to be searched in order to ascertain the extent of British interests in South African mines, and brought the result to the knowledge of his colleagues before their policy as regards the Transvaal and Orange River Colony was decided upon; and further if he can inform the House how many of His Majesty's subjects in the United Kingdom, in Canada, Australia, New Zealand, India, and elsewhere are registered as such shareholders.

Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE: I did not cause the registers of shareholders at Somerset House to be searched in order to ascertain the extent of British interests in South African mines, nor would any such search be of value inasmuch as nearly all the South African mining companies of any importance are registered in South Africa. For this reason I am unable to inform the House how many of His Majesty's subjects in the United Kingdom, in Canada, Australia, New Zealand, India, and elsewhere are registered as shareholders in South African mining companies.

Sir HOWARD VINCENT: Has the right hon. Gentleman's attention been called to the statement that there are upwards of 200,000 shareholders in this country and 60,000 abroad, and is there no information at the Board of Trade on that subject?

Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE: All the information is in South Africa, and if the hon. Gentleman wishes to get it he had better put a Question to the Under-Secretary for the Colonies.

Sir HOWARD VINCENT: I will do so now.

*Mr. CHURCHILL: I am afraid I must ask for notice.

Mr. T. M. HEALY (Louth, N.): Can the President of the Board of Trade tell us how many of these shareholders are bears and how many bulls?

Mr. CROOKS (Woolwich): And how many asses amongst them.

British Commerce and the "Most-Favoured-Nation" Clause.

Mr. STARKEY (Nottinghamshire, Newark): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade if any steps on behalf of British commerce are being taken, in view of the fact that the United States hold that a treaty right to the most-favoured-nation treatment does not entitle its possessor to participate in special privileges granted to others in return for reciprocal concessions.

Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE: Communications on this subject have recently taken place with the United States Government. I am not at present able to make any further statement on the subject.

Consular Reports.

Mr. D. A. THOMAS (Merthyr Tydvil): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade if he will issue a Return of extracts relating to coal from the Reports received up to the present date from His Majesty's diplomatic and consular officers abroad, for 1904 and 1905, or from such Reports received since the date of the similar Return issued in

October, 1904 (Parliamentary Paper, 343, 1904).

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: I shall be glad to give such a Return if the hon. Member will move for it.

Wireless Telegraphy — Working of the Act.

MR. CLAUDE HAY: I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether any Report has been presented to Parliament on the working of the Wireless Telegraph Act; and whether he will state the number of licences granted, the fees charged, and the number of prosecutions, if any, instituted under the Act.

THE POSTMASTER-GENERAL (Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON, Tower Hamlets, Poplar): A Return dealing with the working of the Wireless Telegraph Act was presented on the 18th July, 1905. A further Return is in preparation, which will show the number of licences granted. The fees charged in the case of commercial licences are £1 per annum for each station and 5s. per annum for each ship. No fees are charged on licences for experimental purposes. It has not been found necessary to institute any prosecutions under the Act.

MR. CLAUDE HAY: Will the Return in preparation show the number of licences refused?

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: Yes, Sir, it will show the number of applications made, of them granted, and of those refused.

Magazine Postal Rates to Canada.

MR. EVELYN CECIL (Aston Manor): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether he is taking any steps with regard to the reduction of the postal rates to Canada on British magazines, periodicals, and newspapers, under the special circumstances of the case.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: The question is engaging my attention. But I may take this opportunity of pointing out that the present charge of 4d. a lb. on these postal items does not cover the average cost of the Colonial traffic, which is at present carried on at a loss. A reduction of the general charge on such articles at home, and in the Colonies, sufficient to meet the Canadian case, would entail a very heavy loss of revenue; a loss which could not be recouped, but would only be made greater by any increase that took place in the amount carried due to the reduction of the rate. The question, therefore, of a change which would involve a large general reduction in this item of postage is, under existing conditions, not feasible. The position of Canada, however, in regard to this matter is a peculiar one. But I see, I fear, little prospect of attaining the desired object, unless some special arrangement, entailing probably some sacrifice on either side, could be devised, and in a form which would not create a precedent.

MR. CHARLES DEVLIN (Galway) asked if the right hon. Gentleman was aware that these magazines, etc., carried by the Canadian mail service were so conveyed at the expense of the Canadian Government, and that the British Government contributed nothing to the cost of the mail service.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON was understood to reply that we paid our proportion of the transit dues, and he did not think any portion of the charge which should properly fall on the British Government was paid by the Canadian Government.

MR. CHARLES DEVLIN: But the total cost of the mail service to this country is borne by the Canadian Government.

Voting Registers.

MR. HIGHAM (Yorkshire, W.R., Sowerby): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board if he will consider the advisability of giving to county councils the power to order the printing of the registers in street order, instead of in alphabetical order, where it is found that such a procedure would be advisable, and so lessen the amount of work which is at present thrown upon candidates and their workers in many elections in county divisions.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. JOHN BURNS, Battersea): County councils can already give directions in this matter so far as regards any borough or urban district, which is co-extensive with an electoral division of a Parliamentary county. There would be some difficulty in giving effect to the arrangement proposed as respects rural parishes, but I will take note of the suggestion of my hon. friend.

Meat Inspection.

MR. CHIOZZA MONEY (Paddington, N.): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board if his attention has been directed to the fact that the standard of meat condemnation, strongly urged by the Local Government Board upon local authorities in 1901, is not infrequently ignored in whole or part by sanitary authorities; and if he will, in the interest of the public health, take steps to make the standard referred to absolutely compulsory.

MR. JOHN BURNS: According to the latest information I have received, there seems no reason to doubt that as regards the carcases of cattle the standard referred to is commonly acted upon by the officers of local authorities. I understand, however, that this is not the case to anything like the same extent as regards the carcases of pigs. The Local Government Board have on several occasions impressed upon local authorities the importance of uniformity of action in dealing with tuberculous meat, but legislation would be necessary to make the standard compulsory. I could not promise to propose legislation on the subject pending the Report of the Royal Commission on Tuberculosis.

Mall Improvement.

MR. CLAUDE HAY: I beg to ask the First Commissioner of Works if he will say what is the present position with regard to the Charing Cross entrance to the new road in St. James's Park; and when it is likely to be completed and thrown open for public traffic.

THE FIRST COMMISSIONER OF WORKS (Mr. HARCOURT, Lancashire, Rossendale): The position has undergone no recent change. The foundation of the buildings and entrance to Charing Cross are in course of construction. It is impossible to fix a date for the opening of the road, which must depend upon the completion of the buildings.

MR. CLAUDE HAY: Has all the land necessary to complete the Charing Cross end of the Mall been acquired?

MR. HARCOURT: I think so, but if the hon. Member will put down a Question I will inquire.

Scottish Herring Fishers and a Close Time.

MR. LAMONT (Buteshire): I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland whether, in view of the distress prevailing in the West of Scotland, through the failure of the herring fishery for the last three years, the Fishery Board for Scotland will take action on the lines of such of the resolutions as were carried unanimously at the Fishery Conference held at Rothesay, in November, 1905, at which all sections of the fishing industry were represented; and whether, in default of such action, the Board proposes to take any action whatever.

THE SECRETARY FOR SCOTLAND (Mr. SINCLAIR, Forfarshire): There are conflicting views as to the causes of the failure referred to and as to the advisability of a close time, and I understand that at the Rothesay Conference strong protests were made from more than one quarter against a close time. The whole subject is at present under careful investigation.

Scottish Fishery Board.

MR. SUTHERLAND (Elgin Burghs): I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland whether, in view of the dissatisfaction which exists with reference to the composition of the Fishery Board for Scotland, he will introduce a measure to increase the membership of the Board.

MR. SINCLAIR: No, Sir.

Jury Challenging in Ireland.

MR. T. L. CORBETT (Down, N.): I beg to ask Mr. Attorney-General if he will lay upon the Table a Copy of the Instructions recently issued to Crown

Solicitors as to the discharge of their duties in ordering jurors to stand by.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. Cherry, Liverpool, Exchange): No new instructions have been recently issued to Crown Solicitors as to the discharge of their duties in ordering jurors to stand by. I have recently communicated by letter with each Crown Solicitor in Ireland, in pursuance of the intention I expressed in answer to the Question addressed to me by the hon. Member for North Sligo on Thursday last,† impressing upon him the importance of strict compliance with the Rule on the subject at present in force. This Rule, which was originally issued in February, 1894, was laid on the Table of this House (Paper No. 33 of 1894).

Irish Town Tenants' Grievances.

Mr. VINCENT KENNEDY (Cavan, W.): I beg to ask Mr. Attorney-General if, in view of the fact that several House Lords are anticipating the passing of a Town Tenants Bill for Ireland by harshly treating their tenants, he will recommend the Government to introduce legislation with a view of staying proceedings in all such reported cases pending this legislation.

The CHIEF SECRETARY for IRELAND (Mr. Bryce, Aberdeen, S.): I have not received any information that owners of house property in Ireland are meting out harsh treatment to their tenants. I observe that one of the hon. Member's colleagues is about to introduce a Town Tenants' Bill, and the Government will then have an opportunity of considering their attitude towards the Bill. I am afraid that the suggestion that legislation should be introduced with the object of staying proceedings by property-owners is not a practicable one.

Irish Rent Reductions.

Mr. GINNELL (Westmeath, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland to state the average percentage of reduction given by the Sub-Commis ioners on all rents fixed by them, year by year, since 1889, first for the whole of Ireland, and secondly for county Westmeath.

Mr. BRYCE: The hon. M mber w ll find full statistics on this subject in the Appendix to the Annual Reports of the Land Commission presented to Parliament. I would refer him in particular to the Tables on pages 15, 17, 19, 21, and 31, of the Appendix to last year's report.

Labourers' Allotments at Derryroe.

Mr. SHEEHAN (Cork County, Mid.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that in the last scheme promoted under the Labourers (Ireland) Acts by the Macroom Rural District Council, Mary Herlihy, Derryroe, electoral division of Kilberrehert, applied for and was granted an additional half acre; will he say whether the order granting the half acre has been recently cancelled; and, if so, will he state the reason therefor, and if it is not still possible to have the half acre for this applicant included in the scheme.

Mr. BRYCE: The fact is as stated in the first part of the Question. The Local Government Board informed the Council from the outset that, in view of the state of arrears into which the collection of the rent for labourers' cottages in the district had fallen, they would not be prepared to authorise additional plots in any case in which more than two months' rent was due. Before the Provisional Order was issued, a period of twelve months elapsed, during which the tenants had an opportunity of complying with the Board's requirement; but fifty-three tenants (including Mary Herlihy) failed to comply with that requirement. The plot in question cannot, accordingly, be now authorised except in pursuance of a new scheme.

Oatfield and Newcastle Estates, Ballinasloe.

Mr. JOHN ROCHE (Galway, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been directed to a resolution passed by the Ballinasloe No. 1 Rural District Council, disapproving of the action of the Congested Districts Board in connection with the estates of Oatfield and Newcastle, of which the Board has been in possession these two years past; and will he say whether the Board has dismissed the permanent staff of labourers kept by the late owner, Mr. Longworth; whether he is aware that these lands were taken from the local peasantry whose descendants are now agricultural labourers in the district; and whether, when these lands come to be distributed, the claims of those who were deprived of their birthright will be considered and provided for before strangers or outsiders are allotted any portion of these estates; and whether he will consider the advisability of transferring these lands from the Congested Districts Board to the Estates Commissioners with a view to an early distribution.

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† See (4) *Debates*, clii., 1322.

MR. BRYCE: The Congested Districts Board inform me that they have received the resolution referred to, and will consider it at their next meeting towards the end of this month. In the meantime, I am not in a position to answer the remaining inquiries in the Question; but it must not be assumed that the Board will consider that the only Irishmen to be placed upon lands that may come into their hands are those who live in the immediate vicinity.

Harlech Estate, County Westmeath.

MR. GINNELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that in the case of a divided farm on the Harlech estate, county Westmeath, the landlord, on the valuation of his own valuer voluntarily gave a reduction of £19 on the rent of the portion retained by the former occupant, and that the Land Commission gave no reduction on the rent of the portion transferred, although an acre had been taken off the latter for the use of a labourer; and will he devise some practical means of testing the ability and impartiality of the Sub-Commissioners.

MR. BRYCE: The Land Commission are unable to trace the case referred to upon their records from the information given in the Question. In regard to the final inquiry of the Question, I may state that, under the rules of March 13th, 1899, lay assistant Commissioners appointed for the first time since that date are tested by the Civil Service Commissioners, in, amongst other subjects, agriculture and the principles of surveying. I do not see what test of the impartiality of the decisions of the Sub-Commissioners can be supplied otherwise than by the right of appeal already provided for by law.

MR. J. P. FARRELL (Longford, N.): Does the right hon. Gentleman think that the proper persons to fix rents for tenants in Ireland are broken down landlords and land agents.

[No Answer was returned.]

Colonel Symthe, of Collinstown, and his Tenants.

MR. GINNELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he has seen a letter of Colonel Smythe, of Collinstown, Westmeath, dated January 22nd, 1906, allowing his tenants a month to consider his terms of sale; a letter from Colonel Smythe's solicitors, dated February 2nd, demanding from one of these tenants immediate payment of a hanging gale with costs of demand, and a copy of a writ for this amount, served on the February 5th, before the month allowed for consideration had run half its course; and whether, in view of the danger to social peace, and to the security of the State for the payment of annuities so contracted, of this method of forcing tenants to sign improvident purchase agreements, His Majesty's Government will take any steps to check or counteract such conduct.

MR. BRYCE: The hon. Member has sent to me, for my inspection, the documents referred to in the first two paragraphs of his Question, and the facts appear to be correctly stated. As to the final inquiry of the Question, it must be remembered that, supposing the facts to be as stated, His Majesty's Government have no power to intervene. The Estates Commissioners, however, inform me that should proceedings for the sale of the estate come before them, they will, before sanctioning any advance, make such inquiry into the circumstances of the case as may be within their province as defined by law.

Lefroy Estate, County Limerick.

MR. LUNDON (Limerick, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, can he say how the remainder of the Lefroy Estate, in Cahirconlish, county Limerick, stands; what progress has been made with the apportionment of the thirty-four acre lots among the labourers of the locality, and whether the No. 1 Limerick District Council are proceeding in the matter, so that the plots may soon be available for tillage; has Mr. Lefroy approached the Estates Commissioners in regard to the sale to them of the other parts of the demesne; and is it within the jurisdiction of the Estates Commissioners to approach Mr. Lefroy with regard to purchasing it in the interests of the labourers.

MR. BRYCE: The Limerick No. 1 Rural District Council have recently submitted to the Local Government Board an extensive improvement scheme, which includes a proposal to acquire, by direct purchase from the vendor, thirty-four acres of land on the Lefroy Estate, for the purpose of labourers' cottages. The Inspector's Report on the scheme has now been received, and is at present under the consideration of the Board. The Estates Commissioners are negotiating with the vendor for the purchase of 200 acres of his estate, including seventy-one acres of the demesne of Cahirconlish. The Commissioners have jurisdiction to purchase land for resale to trustees for the purposes, amongst other things, of the Labourers' Acts, such lands to be held upon trust in accordance with a scheme to be approved by the Lord-Lieutenant. (Sections 4 and 20 of the Act of 1903.)

Donegal Agricultural Committee and Instructresses in Butter Making.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that, in May, 1904, the Donegal Committee of Agriculture advertised for and appointed two ladies, natives of county Donegal, Miss O'Malley and Miss McMenomin, to the positions of instructresses in butter making, but that the Department of Agriculture refused to sanction these appointments on the sole ground that these ladies, whose qualifications were of the highest, were natives of the county in which their duties as instructresses would be performed; whether he is aware that, in consequence of this action of the Department, the Committee have refused to put the agricultural schemes in operation, to the detriment of agricultural instruction in the county, and that for upwards of two years the deadlock caused by the attitude of the Department has been productive of discontent; and what steps, if any, does the Government propose to take with a view to the prevention by the Department of natives of county Donegal from filling appointments in that county conferred on them by the Donegal Committee, and for which their qualifications are unquestionable.

MR. BRYCE: It is the fact that the ladies named in the Question were selected for the positions mentioned by the Donegal Committee, and that the appointments were not sanctioned by the Department of Agriculture, and that the County Committee have in consequence refused to put the butter-making scheme into operation in the county. Other schemes, however, are in operation in the county. I am informed that when the Department offered the ladies in question an opportunity of being examined to show their fitness for appointments elsewhere, only one attended and she failed to pass. It has been the view of the Department that, in order to avoid undue local influences or favouritism, and for other reasons, instructors should not, as a rule, be employed in the counties to which they belong; and the Council of Agriculture, representing the Committee of the County Councils throughout Ireland, has never expressed disapproval of this view.

*MR. HUGH LAW (Donegal, W.): I observe that the right hon. Gentleman says that the Department considers that "as a rule" instructors should not be employed in the counties to which they belong. Seeing that profound dissatisfaction has been caused in Donegal by the action of the Department cannot the right hon. Gentleman say that this is a case in which exception might be made?

MR. BRYCE: Of course I am willing to consider any questions that may be brought to my notice, but I am bound to say that the rule, as far as I can judge, appears to be one which should be observed.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that the Donegal Committee offered a compromise and suggested that the lady for East Donegal should be allowed to act in West Donegal. As it is a large county will the right hon. Gentleman accept that?

MR. KILBRIDE (Kildare, S.): Is this policy of refusing to employ natives in their own country the reason for the Agricultural Board's employing so many Scotchmen?

MR. FLAVIN (Kerry. N.): Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that the Kerry Committee have unanimously refused to accept the instructions of the Department because of this rule?

MR. BRYCE: I have not heard that.

MR. FLAVIN: It is so.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: Let the Agricultural Department overhaul this rule.

Suggested Numbering of the Royal Irish Constabulary.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that in the cities of Waterford, Cork, Limerick, and Belfast the members of the Royal Irish Constabulary who perform the duties of policemen in those cities have numbers on their uniforms for the purpose of identification; that although the Royal Irish Constabulary in the cities have numbers on their uniforms, the constabulary in country districts do not wear numbers on their uniforms; and that the constabulary in the cities, when drafted even for a few hours into country districts, have the numbers removed from their uniforms; what is the reason that the means for identification of a policeman by the wearing of a number on his uniform should be afforded to the inhabitants of the Irish cities and denied to the inhabitants of the Irish country districts; and whether, having regard to the frequency of the cases in which members of the Irish Constabulary have refused to give their names when required so to do by persons desiring to complain of their conduct, and the difficulty of identifying them by reason of their uniform, steps will be taken to provide that members of the Royal Irish Constabulary, like the mem- of the police of other countries, should wear numbers on their uniforms, both in town or country.

MR. BRYCE: The facts are as stated in the first two clauses of the Question, but I am informed that it is not the case that the city constabulary, as a rule, have the numbers removed from their uniforms when drafted into the country, nor that members of the constabulary frequently refuse to give their names when requested to do so. The reasons for the existing practice have been frequently stated in this House, and I am not prepared, as at present advised, to say that that practice should be altered. Members of the force are being constantly removed, singly or in detachments, from one part of the country to another, so that a system of numbering by divisions could not easily be arranged, and no difficulty appears to have occurred in ascertaining the names of men against whom any complaint is made.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: Is it not the case that constables constantly refuse to give their names?

MR. BRYCE: I am surprised to hear that.

Dr. Condon's Ballyshannon Estate.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that Dr. Condon, of Ballyshannon, county Donegal, sold a small property to his tenants in the immediate vicinity of Ballyshannon two years ago; and will he say, in view of the fact that the property is entirely unencumbered, there being no head rent nor any complication of title, nor yet any parties to whom the funds are to be allocated other than Dr. Condon, the vendor, what is the cause of the delay in forwarding Dr. Condon his money, seeing that the money has been lodged in court for well nigh a year, Dr. Condon receiving neither principal nor interest for that period; and what steps, if any, will be taken to expedite the conclusion of this transaction.

MR. BRYCE: I am informed by the Land Commission that the purchase money in this case was advanced and paid into the Bank of Ireland on March 16th, 1905. After some delay, the vendor's title was lodged on June 5th, 1905, and the examiner's rulings on title were issued within three days. The Judicial Commissioner has already, viz., in November last—called upon the solicitor for the vendor to explain his delay in lodging the required schedule for the distribution of the purchase money, whereupon the solicitor undertook to speed the proceedings. The schedule, however, has not yet been lodged, and I am informed that the cas will, at the first opportunity, be again placed on the judge's list for explanation of the delay.

Ballycastle Petty Sessions Clerk.

MR. MACVEAGH (Down, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the fact that the clerk of petty sessions for Ballycastle District, county Antrim, follows ten other avocations, including land steward, gamekeeper, pier overseer, pier pay clerk, mining pay clerk, bog bailiff, land agent, auctioneer, shipping agent, and manager of his father's business, and that these occupations compel him to discharge by deputy most of the duties of petty sessions clerk; whether it is permitted by the regulations governing such appointments to hold so many other appointments or to discharge his duties by deputy; and whether any steps will be taken in the matter.

MR. BRYCE: The registrar of petty sessions clerks informs me that the petty sessions clerk referred to is also engaged in the following occupations and no others, viz.:—Auctioneer; agent for a small coasting steamer; agent to a local landlord; and cashier to a local mining company. The registrar states that the clerk performs his duties in that capacity satisfactorily, and has never performed them by deputy. The regulations in force when the clerk was appointed did not prohibit the following of the occupations mentioned. In rural districts the duties of petty sessions clerks occupy but a limited portion of their time, and their remuneration is on a corresponding scale.

MR. MACVEAGH: How does he carry on all these avocations?

A NATIONALIST MEMBER: He's a Poo Bah.

Kerry Small Holdings.

MR. MURPHY (Kerry, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Congested Districts Board propose to take any steps for the enlargement and improvement of holdings in the Gneevgullia and Rathmore districts of the county of Kerry, where some large farms are at present available for the purpose; and if he can state if the board have any representative in the county, and what his name and address are at the present time.

MR. BRYCE: The Congested Districts Board have not yet purchased any land near the townland first named in the Question, and, are, therefore, not in a position to take present steps for the enlargement of the holdings on that townland. Rathmore is not situate within the congested districts. The farms referred to in the Question have not yet been offered for sale to the board by either the owners or occupiers. Mr. A. H. McLean, who is stationed at Tralee, is the board's inspector in charge of the estates purchased by them in the counties of Kerry and Cork.

Dungiven School Teacher.

MR. THOMAS O'DONNELL (Kerry, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that a certain Mr. Kennedy brought a charge against the teacher of the Dungiven F.N.S., county Donegal, for alleged assault on his children; that a local magistrate who framed the charge adjudicated afterwards on it; that the teacher was fined by the Dungiven bench; that this conviction was afterwards quashed in the Court of King's Bench, Dublin, and that as a result the children of Mr. Kennedy were extremely troublesome and disobedient, and were excluded by the manager without a promise of good behaviour; and whether, seeing that the teacher, though perfectly innocent, has not received any salary during the past fourteen months, he proposes to take any action in this matter. I beg also to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the Rev. E. Loughrey, P.P., was removed from the managership of the Dungiven F.N.S., county Donegal, for doing his duty as manager in helping to maintain order and discipline in the school; that this same clergyman is still manager of six other schools in the parish, and that a secret inquiry was held, at which neither manager nor teacher was present, the result of which was that Father Loughrey was removed from the managership of this school; and whether he proposes to take any action in the matter.

Mr. BRYCE: The Commissioners of National Education inform me that in February, 1905, Mr. Kennedy prosecuted the mistress of the school named for an assault upon his daughter, a pupil of the school. The Magistrates at petty sessions unanimously convicted and fined the teacher. Notice of appeal to Quarter Sessions was served by the defendant, but was afterwards withdrawn. She carried the case to the Court of King's Bench, where the conviction was quashed on a technical point. Her salary was not held back by the Commissioners, but she persistently refused to accept the salary awarded to her on the ground that it was insufficient for a teacher of her standing. After the legal proceedings, the Rev. Mr. Loughrey, who was then the local manager of the school, refused admission to the children of Mr. Kennedy until an apology should be given by both parent and children; but the manager was advised by the Commissioners that this action was unwarranted. He refused, however, to recede from the position which he had taken up. An inquiry, at which both manager and teacher were present, was thereupon held by the chief inspector, as the result of which the Rev. Mr. Loughrey was removed by the Commissioners from the managership of the school, upon the ground that he had improperly refused to admit the children of Mr. Kennedy, and had declined to recognise the authority of the Commissioners. Mr. Loughrey is still recognised as manager of seven other national schools, as to which no question of the Commissioners' authority has arisen. The entire matter is one for the Commissioners, and not for the Executive Government.

Mr. THOMAS O'DONNELL: Will the right hon. Gentleman suggest that the National Board should hold an independent inquiry into this case?

Mr. BRYCE: I will forward to that Board any communication I may receive from the hon. Member, but I am not in a position to express any opinion myself.

Mr. KILBRIDE: Will the right hon. Gentleman ask the National Board to consider as to removing this manager from the control of other schools?

Mr. BRYCE: These are matters of administration which I do not think should be made the subject of questions in this House.

Irish Labourers' Holdings.

Mr. EDWARD BARRY (Cork County, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the instructions issued to inspectors under the Land Act of 1903 suggest, in the case of labourers paying rent either in money or in kind to the farmer and not to the vendor, that their status should remain the same as it was previously; and, whether, in view of the specific provisions of the Act requiring each man in exclusive occupation of a parcel of land to be made the owner of it subject to the purchase annuity, he proposes to take any, and, if any, what action in the matter.

Mr. BRYCE: The answer to the first part of the Question is in the affirmative. As regards the second part, there are, so far as I am aware, no provisions of the Act requiring that every man in exclusive occupation of a "parcel of land" should be made the owner thereof subject to a purchase annuity; though the policy of the Act certainly seems to require that tenants and sub-tenants of holdings should, as far as possible, be all so dealt with upon the sale of an estate. The interest of the labourer in a plot is not technically a holding within the meaning of the Act. The Estates Commissioners carry out the policy of the Act, so far as they can, and the Government do not consider that any further action in the matter is required.

Leahy's Estate, Cahirciveen.

Mr. BOLAND (Kerry, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the attention of the Estates Commissioners has been called to the circumstances under which negotiations for the sale of the J. W. Leahy estate at Aghatubrid, Cahirciveen, have been carried on; and whether a sale of this estate will be sanctioned at twenty-three years' purchase on what are really first-term rents, in view of the fact that the tenants were compelled to sign purchase agreements, through being threatened with a claim for so-called arrears.

Mr. BRYCE: The Estates Commissioners inform me that seventeen agreements for purchase in respect of this estate have been lodged. In three of these cases in which judicial rents have been fixed since 1896, the average number of years' purchase is twenty-three. The Commissioners have no knowledge of the circumstances under which the negotiations for sale were carried on, nor have they any information that duress was used against the tenants. If any complaint to that effect should be made to them they would investigate the matter before sanctioning advances.

Mr. KILBRIDE: What was the amount of arrears due by these tenants when they entered into the agreement?

Mr. BRYCE: I have no information to enable me to reply.

Mr. FLAVIN: Is it not the fact that they are paying twenty-three years' purchase in a congested district?

Sir EDWARD CARSON: Has the right hon. Gentleman any power to interfere?

Mr. BRYCE: No, Sir, I have not.

Irish Financial Relations with Great Britain.

Mr. JOHN O'CONNOR: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland what are the estimated amounts of the true revenue of Ireland in the financial years ending the 31st March, 1895–1900 and 1905 respectively; what would the amounts be if the collections of revenue in Ireland were based on contributions made according to the findings of the Royal Commission on the financial relations between Great Britain and Ireland, viz., that the taxable capacity of Ireland does not exceed one-twentieth of that of Great Britain.

Mr. McKENNA: The estimated amount of Ireland's true contribution to Revenue was in 1894–5, £7,690,000; in 1899–1900, £8,664,500; in 1904–5, £9,753,500; if Ireland's contribution to tax-revenue in those years had been limited to one-twentieth of the tax-revenue contributed by Great Britain, the revenue derived from Ireland would have been in 1894–5, £4,856,000; in 1899–1900, £6,062,500; in 1904–5, £7,132,500. It is necessary however to point out that the expenditure on Irish Services is estimated to have been——

Mr. JOHN O'CONNOR: I never asked that.

Mr. McKENNA, continuing, is estimated to have been in 1894–5, £5,616,000 in 1899–1900, £6,980,000; in 1904–5, £7,567,000. Consequently, if Ireland's contribution had been reduced to the proportions indicated, the result would have been, not only that Ireland would have contributed nothing to the cost of services of an Imperial character, but that Ireland's revenue would have fallen considerably short of the cost of purely Irish Services.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: Can the right hon. Gentleman tell us how much Australia and Canada contribute for Imperial purposes?

SIR EDWARD CARSON (Dublin University): Is it proposed to reduce Irish taxation?

MR. McKENNA: That Question should be addressed to the Prime Minister.

MR. JOHN O'CONNOR: Having regard to the very unsatisfactory condition of the financial relations between the two countries, is it proposed by the Government to revise them at a very near period?

MR. McKENNA: That Question should not be addressed to me.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Can the hon. Gentleman give us details of the expenditure on Irish Services?

MR. McKENNA: The hon. Member can have them if he wishes.

MR. T. M. HEALY: I shall move for a Return.

Ireland and the Canal Commission.

MR. MACVEAGH: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether the working of Irish canals will be included in the terms of reference to the Royal Commission on Canals.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN, Stirling Burghs): Certainly, Sir.

One other Member took and subscribed the Oath.

ECCLESIASTICAL DISORDERS BILL.

Order for Second Reading upon Friday 4th May, read, and discharged. Bill withdrawn.

SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES.)

Sir W. BRAMPTON GURDON reported from the Committee of Selection; That they had nominated the following Members to serve on the Standing Committee for the consideration of all Bills relating to Trade (including Agriculture and Fishing), Shipping, and Manufactures, which may, by Order of the House, be committed to such Standing Committee:—Mr. Attorney-General, Mr. Baldwin, Mr. J. A. Bright, Mr. Cawley, Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. Channing, Mr. Cheetham, Mr. Jesse Collings, Mr. Courthope, Mr. Cremer, Mr. Crombie, Mr. Alexander Cross, Mr. Cullinan, Mr. David Davies, Mr. Vaughan-Davies, Mr. Timothy Davies, Sir Frederick Dixon-Hartland, Mr. Doogan, Mr. Duckworth, Mr. C. Duncan, Mr. Frank Edwards, Mr. Everett, Mr. Ferens, Sir Henry Fowler, Mr. Gill, Sir W. Evans-Gordon, Colonel Harrison-Broadley, Mr. Hayden, Mr. Higham, Sir William Holland, Mr. Idris, Mr. John Johnson, Mr. Kearley, Mr. Lloyd-George, Colonel Long, Mr. McKillop, Mr. Mansfield, Mr. Meehan, Mr. T. P. O'Connor, Mr. O'Mara, Mr. Parkes, Mr. Pike Pease, Mr. Thomas Richards, Mr. Runciman, Mr. T. W. Russell, Mr. Herbert Samuel, Mr. Shackleton, Mr. Soames, Sir Edward Strachey, Mr. James Stuart, Mr. John Talbot, Mr. Austin Taylor, Mr. Theodore Taylor, Mr. H. J. Tennant, Mr. D. A. Thomas, Mr. Verney, Mr. Wadsworth, Mr. Walrond, Mr. Walsh, Mr. Cathcart Wason, Mr. George White, Mr. Osmond Williams, Colonel Williams, Lord Willoughby de Eresby, Mr. John Wilson, Mr. Wolff, and Mr. Samuel Young.

Sir W. BRAMPTON GURDON further reported from the Committee; That they had nominated the following Members to serve on the Standing Committee for the consideration of all Bills relating to Law, and Courts of Justice, and Legal Procedure which may, by Order of the House, be committed to such Standing Committee:—The Lord Advocate, Mr. Arkwright, Mr. Atherley-Jones, Mr. Harmood-Banner, Mr. Barran, Mr. Billson, Mr. Boland, Mr. Brace, Mr. John Burns, Sir Edward Carson, Mr. Cave, Sir Edward Clark, Mr. Cobbold, Mr. Curtis Craig, Mr. Dickinson, Sir Charles Dilke, Mr. Akers-Douglas, Mr.

Clement Edwards, Mr. Enoch Edwards, Mr. Samuel Evans, Mr. George Faber (York), Sir George Fardell, Mr. Flynn, Mr. Secretary Gladstone, Mr. Ellis Griffith, Mr. Harwood, Sir James Haslam, Mr. T. M. Healy, Mr. Arthur Henderson, Mr. J. M. Henderson, Colonel Ivor Herbert, Mr. Charles Hobhouse, Mr. Hodge, Sir J. Jardine, Sir Joseph Leese, Colonel Legge, Mr. R. C. Lehmann, Sir Francis Lowe, Mr. J. R. Macdonald, Dr. Macnamara, Mr. Swift MacNeill, Mr. Maddison, Mr. Massie, Mr. Middlemore, Mr. Lloyd-Morgan, Mr. Nannetti, Mr. Nussey, Mr. Pickersgill, Sir Francis Powell, Mr. Rainy, Mr. Rawlinson, Mr. Reckitt, Mr. Remnant, Mr. Compton Rickett, Mr. Bryn Roberts, Mr. S. Roberts, Mr. Soares, Mr. Solicitor-General, Mr. Solicitor-General for Scotland, Sir Benjamin Stone, Mr. J. W. Taylor, Mr. Thornton, Sir Howard Vincent, Mr. Waldron, Mr. Wallace, Mr. Joseph Walton, Mr. Whitehead, and Mr. W. L. Williams.

Reports to lie upon the Table.

(SELECTION STANDING COMMITTEES) (CHAIRMEN'S PANEL).

Sir W. Brampton Gurdon reported from the Committee of Selection; That they had selected the following Six Members to be the Chairmen's Panel and to serve as Chairmen of the two Standing Committees to be appointed under Standing Order No. 49:—Sir Thomas Esmonde, Mr. Laurence Hardy, Mr. Stuart-Wortley, Sir James Woodhouse, Mr. Brynmor Jones, and Mr. Eugene Wason.

Report to lie upon the Table.

SELECTION (PRIVATE LEGISLATION PROCEDURE (SCOTLAND) ACT, 1899) (COMMISSIONERS.)

Sir W. Brampton Gurdon reported from the Committee of Selection; That in pursuance of the provisions of The Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899, they had selected the following fifteen Members to form the Parliamentary Panel of Members of this House to act as Commissioners:—Mr. Alexander Black, Mr. McCrae, Sir J. Tuke, Mr. Levy, Mr. Weir, Mr. Findlay, Mr. Younger, Mr. Lamont, Mr. Ainsworth, Mr. John Dewar, Mr. J. D. Hope, Mr. Wilkie, Mr. R. Bell, Major Anstruther-Gray, and Mr. Ernest Gardner.

Report to lie upon the Table.

NEW BILLS.

REPRESENTATION OF THE PEOPLE BILL.

"To amend the Law relating to the Registration of Voters, removing certain restrictions appertaining to the qualification of occupation and lodger voters at Parliamentary and occupation voters at Municipal Elections, and shortening the qualifying period required for all such voters from twelve months to three months," presented by Mr. Edward Dunn; supported by Mr. Rowlands, Mr. Nicholls, and Mr. Athelstan Rendal; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 69.]

SPURIOUS SPORTS BILL.

"To prohibit the hunting coursing, and shooting of animals, kept in confinement," presented by Mr. Luttrell, supported by Mr. Corrie Grant, Mr. Shipman, Mr. G. Greenwood, and Mr. Ramsay Macdonald; to be read a second time upon Wednesday, 14th March, and to be printed. [Bill 70.]

JUSTICES OF THE PEACE BILL.

"To amend the law in regard to the qualification of Justices of the Peace and to make changes in respect to recommendations to the Lord Chancellor. presented by Mr. Luttrell; supported by Mr. Charles Hobhouse and Mr. Robert Price; to be read a second time upon Wednesday, 21st March, and to be printed. [Bill 71.]

PLACES OF WORSHIP ENFRANCHISEMENT BILL.

"To provide for the Enfranchisement of leasehold Places of Worship," presented by Mr. Samuel Evans; supported by Mr. Bryn Roberts, Mr. Perks, Mr. Brynmor Jones, and Mr. Illingworth; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 72.]

POST OFFICE (MONEY ORDERS) BILL.

"To extend certain provisions of the Post Office (Money Orders) Acts to Money Orders transmitted to and from Foreign States and British Protectorates," presented by Mr. Sydney Buxton; to be read a second time upon Thursday, and to be printed. [Bill 73.]

CROFTERS' HOLDINGS (SCOTLAND) ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

"To amend the Crofters' Holdings (Scotland) Acts," presented by Mr. Weir; supported by Mr. Morton, Mr. John Dewar, Mr. Cathcart Wason, and Mr. Dalziel; to be read a second time upon Friday, and to be printed. [Bill 74.]

POST OFFICE SERVANTS.

Motion made and Question proposed, "That a Select Committee of seven Members, to be nominated by the Committee of Selection, be appointed to inquire into the wages and position of the principal classes of Post Office servants (other than the supervising and clerical force, and those in the engineering, stores, and factories departments), and also of the unestablished sub-postmasters. To examine, so far as may be necessary for the purpose of their Report, the conditions of employment of these classes. To report whether, having regard to the conditions and prospects of their employment, and, as far as may be, to the standard rate of wages and the position of other classes of workers, the remuneration they receive is adequate or otherwise."—(*Mr. Sydney Buxton.*)

Sir A. ACLAND-HOOD (Somersetshire, Wellington) said he desired to move the adjournment of the debate for a reason of some importance to minorities, and he would put that reason very briefly before the House. Hon. Members would remember that some few years ago the right hon. Gentleman the Member for East Worcestershire was opposed to the appointment of a similar Select Committee for many reasons. The right hon. Member declared that hon. Members serving on such a Committee being Members of the House would be subjected to a great deal of annoyance and of undue pressure from Post Office officials. Last session, when the Post Office Vote was brought forward, the hon. Member for the Chesterfield Division moved the appointment of a Select Committee and the Government of the day again opposed it on the same grounds. There was a debate and a division, and nearly the whole of the supporters of the then Government voted against the appointment of the Committee. No doubt many of them suffered for it at the general election; they either lost their seats or had their majorities reduced in consequence of the vote. He did not complain on that account, because, after all, if a Member of the House did his duty to the best of his ability he must expect such treatment. But when the Committee was promised by the right hon. Gentleman the Postmaster-General early in the present session, the hon. Gentleman the Secretary of the Treasury came to him and told him that it would be a Committee of five members and asked him to nominate one. He invited some Members of the House to serve on it, but met with the reply that they had voted against the Committee in the last session and therefore they could not serve upon it during the present session. Under these circumstances he had to look elsewhere, and he examined a division list for the names of Members of his own Party who had voted in favour of the Committee. As a result he nominated the hon. Member for Hoxton, who had been in the House some time and whose industry, intelligence, and capacity no one could doubt. He was bound to say he was considerably surprised when the Postmaster-General came to him and objected to the hon. Gentleman. These matters had always been dealt with in years past in a most friendly way between the Whips of both sides of the House. Indeed, the only way in which they could carry on this sort of work was through the recognised channels. But he did object to a Cabinet Minister coming to him and saying that the man whom he had nominated was not fit to be put on the Committee. He had occupied the position of Patronage Secretary for three years, and he had had names handed to him by his right hon. friend the present Home Secretary and by hon. Members below the gangway representing other parties, but he had never raised the slightest objection, although he might have been well aware when the names were handed to him that they were not those of Members calculated to accelerate the progress of the particular Bill which the Committee had to consider. He had, however, always recognised the right of minorities to nominate their own men to sit on Select Committees. He wondered what the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Waterford would have said if during last session he had refused to accept his nominees on behalf of the Irish Party. He had no doubt he would have been told that he had taken an unwarrantable liberty, and he believed also that the matter would have been brought before the House. Of course it was within the right of the House to reject any Member who might be proposed, and he did not for one moment dispute that right, but he did dispute the right of a Minister with a huge majority behind his back to refuse the demands of recognised Whips. He asked the right hon. Gentleman the Postmaster-General why he objected to the hon. Member for Hoxton, and the reply he received was that he wanted a judicial Committee. He himself had always considered that Committees appointed by the House were judicial Committees in the sense that they were impartial, and he did not know what else a judicial Committee was unless it was one which was expected to give judgment in favour of the Department by which it was appointed. He hoped that was not the case in the present instance, but when he saw the right hon. Member, having rejected his nomination, suddenly approach hon. Members on the Opposition side of the House and ask them to serve on the Committee he must say it astonished him. He did not make any charge against the right hon. Gentlemen personally, but he must say it was not according to custom, and was altogether outside the ordinary rules of the House. Indeed, he would ask whether a Committee appointed in such a way, instead of having been appointed through the ordinary channels — whether a Committee appointed by the direct interference of the Minister of a Department—would not rest under some suspicion? The right hon. Gentleman's action really reminded him of Balak. He thought the right hon. Gentleman must have wanted the Committee to prophesy good concerning his Department and not evil. Well, after that they apparently came to a deadlock and no one was nominated. But one day he happened to be in the House and he espied the right hon. Gentleman standing at the table talking to the clerk and immediately afterwards he asked the clerk what the right hon. Gentleman had handed him. He found that he had put down the Motion which now stood upon the Paper. Of course the right hon. Gentleman was perfectly within his right in doing such a thing, but it was not in accordance with custom. He should have informed him of his proposed change of procedure, but he had never said the least word to him on the subject until the previous day, when he asked him what he was going to do in regard to it. He was as anxious as anyone could be to make things work as smoothly as possible, and, so far as his right hon. friend the present Patronage Secretary to the Treasury was concerned, there had been no trouble whatever. But what was the result of all that had occurred? They now had a Motion down to the effect that the Committee of Selection should appoint the Committee. No doubt the Committee of Selection would use their discretion to the best of their ability, but it was quite possible that they might find great difficulty in putting on the Committee Unionist Members who had given no pledge on the subject to be inquired into. He objected to what had taken place on three grounds. He thought, in the first place, that an undeserved slur had been cast upon the right hon. Member for Hoxton; in the second place, there had been an interference with the custom of the House in this matter; and in the third place, he thought it would be found, if the Committee were to be appointed by the Committee of Selection, that Members who would naturally wish not to serve would be induced to do so because they would not like to refuse the request of the Committee of Selection. He felt it his duty to make this protest, not simply on behalf of his own Party, but on behalf of all minorities in the House. He did not believe that minorities should be at the mercy of any such action, on the part of a

Government which had an overwhelming majority in the lobbies, and who, consequently, would have a large majority on all Committees. He wished to retain the practice under which minorities in the past had always nominated their own men, freely and independently—and he did not think a Government which had a great numerical majority in the lobbies and great numerical superiority in all Committees should object to their nominating their own Members of a Committee. He was quite prepared to leave himself and his case to the fair judgment of the House and begged to move accordingly.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the debate be now adjourned."—(*Sir Alexander Acland-Hood.*)

THE POSTMASTER-GENERAL (Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON, Tower Hamlets, Poplar) said his first words would be those of ample apology to the right hon. Member who had just spoken if in any respect he had seemed to interfere with the functions which he was so admirably performing. He was sure, in regard to the matter, that there had been a great misunderstanding, but he was also prepared to take the whole of the blame for it upon himself. He admitted that in all his dealings with the right hon. Gentleman he had been met with the utmost possible courtesy and everything had been absolutely straightforward. As he had already said, as far as he was concerned, there had been a misunderstanding with regard to the matter, and he would tell the House frankly how the question stood. He had never gathered from his conversation with the right hon. Gentleman that he was opposed to the appointment of the Committee, and he did not think it was necessary for him to go into the history of that question. The Government, having come to the conclusion that it was desirable that such a Committee should be appointed, a statement to that effect was made to the House early in the session, and it then became necessary for him to consider what form such Committee should take. He had felt very strongly indeed that it was essential, in view of the fact that the Committee would have to deal with difficult and delicate questions, that it should, as far as possible, be an absolutely impartial, independent, and judicial Committee. Therefore he suggested to the hon. Member the Patronage Secretary, when he was discussing the matter, that the Committee should consist of five members, and he certainly thought that a Committee of that size would commend itself to the House as a Committee likely, under the circumstances, to carry out its work with some rapidity and some satisfaction to the House as a whole. After that he discussed the matter with the right hon. Gentleman opposite, and he would not deny the point he was now about to put. He certainly understood in talking the matter over with him, not in any official sense, that he quite agreed with the conclusions at which he had arrived with regard to the character of the Committee. He ventured to ask the right hon. Member if he would consider the matter and nominate someone on his side to act. The promise was given to consider it, and in due time the right hon. Member told him that he was proposing the nomination of the hon. Member for Hoxton as a member of the Committee. He told the right hon. Member that as it was to be a a very small Committee it was essential that it should be an impartial Committee, and he certainly, in the course of conversation, expressed to the right hon. Member his objection to the appointment of the Member for Hoxton—not on any personal grounds, but because he had in the past taken very considerable interest in the question, and had voted against the Unionist Party in the last session of Parliament with regard to it. Therefore the position was this: the Committee being a small one had to be an impartial Committee, and whilst he had no objection to the personal capacity of the hon. Member suggested he did feel to a certain extent that he was a prejudiced party with regard to this particular matter, and he ventured to point that out to the right hon. Member. The right hon. Member told him that he had approached some other hon. Member behind him, but had been unable to find anyone willing to serve on the Committee, and, as he also gathered, if he could induce anyone to serve he would not press the nomination of the hon. Member for Hoxton. He certainly had never looked at the proposal to appoint the hon. Member for Hoxton as being official; had he done so he would have at once accepted the nomination, and not taken any further action. It was clear he could not have understood that from the fact that he had approached one or two Members on the other side of the House to see if they would serve, as he certainly understood from his right hon. friend—and he was prepared to take all the blame of misunderstanding upon himself—that if any other hon. Member expressed willingness to serve he was prepared to consider his appointment. He repeated that if he had done anything to which the right hon. Member took exception he was sorry, for he felt as strongly as any Member of the House the absolute importance of maintaining those friendly relations between the Whips which had always existed, and he would have been the last willingly to have done anything to weaken the friendly action between the two sides. But the proposal that a small Committee should be nominated by the House having broken down——

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN (Worcestershire, E.): The right hon. Gentleman says the proposal that a small Selection Committee should be nominated by the House had broken down. I ask why did it break down, and how?

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON said it broke down in the sense that there was no suggestion forthcoming of an alternative nomination to that of the hon. Member for Hoxton. There seemed to be, therefore, two alternatives before the House—either to have the Committee nominated by the House and consequently a partisan Committee, or else to have the question referred to the Committee of Selection. Being anxious that the matter should be treated in no sense as a Party question, he ventured to suggest that the nomination of the Committee should be left to the Selection Committee. He could assure the House that if he had done anything to cause this misunderstanding he very much regretted it. Any action he had taken in regard to the matter had been dictated by his very strong desire as Postmaster-General to have the grievance of the employees of the Department fully inquired into by a strong and impartial Committee.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said that he thought he might, on behalf of those associated with him, at once accept the right hon. Member's assurance that there had been no intention on his part to go behind his right hon. friend the Member for the Wellington division in dealing with the Members of the Opposition. As far as any personal question was concerned, the expressions of the right hon. Gentleman were quite sufficient to dispose of it, and he did not think they need say another word on the subject. But there was a much more important matter in regard to which he proposed to make an appeal to the Leader of the House. The right hon. Gentleman had had the advantage of hearing the very moderate statement of his right hon. friend opposite, and was now in possession of the facts. The position was this: the Government had officially declared their intention to appoint a Select Committee, and, having invited the right hon. Member for the Wellington division to name an hon. Member to serve on that Committee, they had, in defiance of what he believed to be the unbroken practice of Parliament, objected to the hon. Member who was chosen by his right hon. friend to represent the Unionist Party. The Prime Minister shook his head at that, but the fact was borne out by the statement of the Postmaster-General, who said that the proposal for a Select Committee of five members had broken down because the Member for Hoxton had been nominated.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: I am sorry to interrupt the right hon. Member, but what I meant to convey was that the nomination of the hon. Member for Hoxton altered the conplexion of the Committee I desired to set up.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said that of course it was not suggested that the objection arose out of anything personal to the hon. Member for Hoxton, but his point was that it was not within the power of the right hon. Gentleman to object; he should have conformed to the well-considered practice of the House in dealing with the appointment of Committees. It was not to be thought that the majority for the time being with its proportionate majority on Committees should be allowed to dictate to the minority in the House which Member from among its limited numbers should be allowed to serve upon Select Committees. There might have been arguments put forward in favour of having a Committee of that kind appointed by the Committee of Selection rather than by a Committee of the House, and if the Government had in the first place come to the House and suggested that a Committee should be selected by the House to inquire into postal grievances, he did not think there would have been any objection raised to such a course. But he did object to the invidious procedure adopted by the Postmaster-General. He had said that the objection was not a personal one, but that made the matter even graver. He could remember a case where objection had been made to Members serving on Committees on the ground that they had some connection with, or interest in, the matter to be dealt with, but he could never remember any case having occurred in his experience where objection was taken to an hon. Member after he had been invited to serve on a Committee simply because of public action he had taken as a Member of the House. It destroyed the liberty of the minority in this House and it destroyed the whole system on which these Committees had been appointed. He said that on the general principle. When he came to the particular objection urged against his hon. friend he must say that he thought it fell from—he would not say the sublime, but from the serious to the ridiculous. What was the reason alleged by the right hon. Gentleman why his hon. friend the Member for Hoxton was not fit to serve on a Committee of this kind? It was that in the last Parliament, in spite of Lord Stanley and the appeal that was made to him, he, in the discharge of his public duty, voted against the Government and in favour of the Committee. Absolutely! The only objection which the right hon. Gentleman alleged against the appointment of his hon. friend was that he was in favour of the Committee on which they had nominated this gentleman. For himself he did not know exactly what the practice of the Committee of Selection was. Were they to ask him to serve on a Committee of this kind he should beg to be excused, on the ground that, acting with every sense of responsibility, he had repeatedly declared as a Minister in this House that he thought the appointment of such a Committee was inadvisable. But if hon. Members who had voted for the Committee were thereby disqualified, who was going to serve? Were hon. Members who voted against the appointment of the Committee disqualified? If an hon. Member who voted in favour of the appointment of the Committee was disqualified what was to happen to gentlemen who were candidates at the recent election and who declared themselves in favour of or against the Committee? On the principle of the Postmaster-General there was not a single Member of the House elegible to serve on the Committee if it should ever be appointed. He thought the Prime Minister and the Postmaster-General would feel that the ground of objection to his hon. friend was untenable. He believed it was the unbroken tradition of this House in the matter of these Committees to invite the Opposition—in this case the Unionist Opposition—to nominate one representative to whom they were entitled according to the ordinary practice of the House. His right hon. friend nominated a gentleman who was unexceptionable, and because the Postmaster-General objected to the nomination he now sought to change the method of procedure. On the ground of adherence to practice, and on the ground of good feeling and smooth running in the discharge of the duties of the House, he asked the Government to withdraw the Motion before the House and revert to their original proposal

THE PRIME MINISTER AND FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN, Stirling Burghs) said he entirely agreed with two propositions that had been laid down by the two right hon. Gentlemen opposite who had spoken. The first was that there ought to be no disposition to treat with any harshness or unfairness a minority in this House, and, while they had the highest authority in the House appointed with the special duty of looking after the rights of minorities, he ventured to say that there was another person in the House whose duty it also was to see that minorities were not unfairly dealt with, although they might often think that they were unfairly dealt with even by him, and that was the occupier of the position in which he stood. Therefore, he was most anxious that there should be no ground whatever for thinking that there had been any undue interference with the rights of minorities. Undoubtedly this was a very difficult Committee to form. There was a great deal of force in what the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Wellington Division of Somersetshire had said as to the fears that were entertained in many quarters of the effect on the Committee if appointed under pressure and insistence, and the retractive effect of old promises extracted in moments of agony from candidates at the general election. He thought they could understand that the nomination of members to serve on that Committee was a more delicate and more important matter than it would ordinarily be. The right hon. Gentleman and his friends were entitled to one member on the Committee, if it was to be composed of only five members. He understood that the Postmaster-General met the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Wellington Division with the view of discussing, or, at any rate, getting into relationship on the point as to who that one member should be. The right hon. Gentleman said that he had asked several members of the Party, and that they had all declined on the ground that they had committed themselves on the subject last year. The right hon. Gentleman thought he was securing the services of a very competent Member when he suggested the hon. Member for Hoxton who had voted the other way. The very fact that so many members who had voted the other way thought it right in justice to themselves not to take part in the Committee showed how delicate a matter the nomination of the members of the Committee was. The conversation, however, was a private and friendly one. His right hon. friend the Postmaster-General had assured him—he might be mistaken—that he saw in it no signs of a formal nomination, and that it was merely a discussion between them, eliciting the suggestion that the hon. Member for Hoxton should fill this place. If it had been a formal nomination then the Government would have had nothing to do but to accept the nomination of the right hon. Gentleman and the House would have accepted that formal nomination. But the Postmaster-General viewed it in the light of an informal discussion of the matter, and this disclosed to him what he thought was pretty evident from the first that the formation of a Committee to deal with such a subject as this—a Committee of only five members—by the House by the ordinary process was a very difficult matter. If it were a Committee of fifteen or seventeen members they could put on from either side of the House one or two members who took opposite views on the subject, but with the restricted size of the Committee they were to have only one member who had committed himself as strongly as any Member of the House could do by a vote.

Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said the objection of the Postmaster-General to his hon. friend was that he had voted in favour of the appointment of a Committee and that he considered him unfit to act.

Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN said the hon. Member for Hoxton had also taken an interest in the question. He did not think the hon. Member would get up and say that he had a perfectly blank mind on the subject and that he had no settled convictions on it. It was then that his right hon. friend fell back upon the course that ought to have been taken at first, namely, that of referring the matter to the Committee of Selection. While he agreed with the right hon. Gentleman the Member for East Worcestershire as to the necessity of guarding the rights of minorities, he disagreed with him in regard to another matter. The right hon. Gentleman said that in the appointment of these Committees they should follow the old lines and let it be done by friendly communication between the Whips on both sides, and that no other consideration should come into play. He entirely disagreed with that. This difficulty having arisen and presented itself, he thought his right hon. friend was right in shifting his ground and proposing that the matter should be referred to the Committee of Selection. That would be a much better course than appointing a large Committee of the size and quality that was usually dealt with by the two sides of the House. There was no intention on the part of his right hon. friend of interfering with the right hon. Gentleman opposite, or of casting any slur on the hon. Member for Hoxton, or of departing in any way from the old practice. That being so, he himself thought the best thing the House could do was to agree that the Committee of Selection should propose seven members to serve on this important Committee. The House of Commons had always had the most perfect confidence in the Committee of Selection.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR (Liverpool, Scotland) said he belonged to a party which was in a permanent minority in this House, and, that being so, the question raised by the right hon. Gentleman on the Front Opposition Bench was one in which they were bound to take a certain amount of interest. He agreed with the right hon. Gentleman that it was for the minority to chose its representative and not the majority. It would be a very dangerous thing indeed if the Government of the day were allowed to pick and choose the representatives of the minority on such Committees; and if the Government had put the action of the Postmaster-General on that ground he would have opposed it. But by the decision which had been arrived at the Postmaster-General had, if he might say so, done the right thing in a somewhat clumsy way. He did not think that anyone could blame the right hon. Gentleman in being most careful of the manner in which the Members of this Committee, which had such a momentous question to discuss, were selected. He suggested to the right hon. Gentleman on the Front Opposition Bench that he should be satisfied with the statement of the Government, with which he agreed, for there was no doubt that the Committee of Selection would make no choice except on the highest considerations for the public serivce.

MR. HENNIKER HEATON (Canterbury) said he would support the Resolution of the right hon. Member for the Wellington Division, not for the reason the right hon. Gentleman had given, but for other reasons. The time had arrived when all these questions of posts, salaries, and retiring allowances should be removed from the purview of the House of Commons, and that a Civil Service Board should be appointed to deal with them, consisting of the highest gentlemen in the land, who would be irremovable and who would be as much above Parliament as the judges of the country, as was the case in Australia.

*MR. SPEAKER: That question does not arise on this Motion.

MR. HENNIKER HEATON said he thought that the action of the Postmaster-General in referring this matter to a Select Committee would not settle it and that it would burden the Chancellor of the Exchequer with a debt which he could not properly meet.

*MR. SPEAKER: That is not the question before the House.

SIR FRANCIS LOWE (Birmingham, Edgbaston) said that the right hon. Gentleman opposite had adopted a very unusual course in objecting to the nomination of the hon. Member for Hoxton by the Opposition to serve on this Select Committee, and if persisted in it would create a precedent.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: It has already been said by me and by my right hon. friend that if it had been thought that this was a nomination, explicitly and formally made by the right hon. and gallant Member, not a word would have been said. It would have been very improper to do so.

SIR FRANCIS LOWE said he would remind the right hon. Gentleman that it had been already stated by several Gentlemen from the Front Opposition Bench that the name of the hon. Member for Hoxton was put forward as a nomination. That nomination had been objected to by the right hon. the Postmaster-General, and if he persisted in that objection it would constitute a new precedent and the whole procedure of the House as to the constitution of Select Committees would be altered. He had had long experience in the House, and it seemed to him that where an important Committee was to be appointed to inquire into a public question of this importance, they should not refer its composition to the Committee of Selection. He was strongly against that

Committee and thought that the House was the proper tribunal to appoint such a Select Committee. He appealed to the right hon. Gentleman not to establish a new precedent, but, having been assured by Gentlemen on the Front Opposition Bench that they did intend to put forward the name of the hon. Member for Hoxton, to put that hon. Gentleman on the Committee.

*Sir **EDWARD CLARKE** (City of London) said it seemed to be a pity to go to a division on a matter on which both sides of the House were agreed. The Prime Minister had said that this was not to be drawn into a precedent; but if not, why was it to happen at all? So far as he could see, there was no reason why, with the assent of the whole House, the proper course should not be taken. It was admitted that there had been a misunderstanding, a misapprehension. Let that misapprehension pass away and let the true course of the House, sanctioned by all precedents and acknowledged by the Prime Minister to be the true, regular and useful course in the conduct of public business, be taken; and let them appoint a Committee of five, as originally proposed, accepting, as it was now agreed that it ought to have been accepted, the name of the hon. Member for Hoxton as the representative of the Opposition side of the House. If that were done this difficulty would disappear, and there would be no reason for going to a division on the Motion for adjournment. He believed that the Prime Minister would recognise the strength of the feeling which existed on the Opposition side of the House in regard to this matter. It might be that they were in a small minority and that they were in the power of the majority; but this matter was far too important to be allowed to pass without such a protest as was contained in the Motion for the adjournment and the further protest which the minority would be compelled to make if what they considered to be an arbitrary proceeding on the part of the majority of the House were insisted on in refusing to accept the hon. Member for Hoxton when nominated from the Opposition side of the House. He hoped the Prime Minister would spare the House an unnecessary division and subsequent debate by recurring to the proposal which the Government originally made, and that that proposal would be carried through with the entire consent of both sides of the House.

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 107; Noes, 311. (Division List No. 4.)

AYES.

Anson, Sir William Reynell
Anstruther-Gray, Major
Arnold-Forster,Rt.Hn.HughO
Ashley, W. W.
Aubrey-Fletcher,RtHonSirH.
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Capt. C. B. (Hornsey)
Baring, Hon.Guy(Winchester)
Barnes, G. N.
Barrie,H.T. (Londonderry, N.)
Beach,Hn.MichaelHughHicks
Beckett, Hon. Gervase
Bowles, G. Stewart
Bridgeman, W. Clive
Butcher, Samuel Henry
Campbell,JH.M.(DublinUniv.
Carlile, E. Hildred
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Castlereagh, Viscount
Cavendish,Rt.Hn.VictorC.W.
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Cecil,LordJ PJoicey-(Stamf'rd
Cecil, Lord R.(Marylebone,E.)
Chamberlain,Rt.Hn.J.A(Worc
Clarke,SirEdward(CityLond'n
Coates, E.Feetham(Lewisham)
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Courthope, G. Loyd
Craig,CharlesCurtis(Antrim,S
Craig, Capt. James (Down, E.)
Craik, Sir Henry
Dalrymple, Viscount
Dixon-HartlandSirFredDixon
Douglas, Rt. Hn. A. Akers-
Du Cros, Harvey
Duncan, C.(Barrow-in-Furness
Duncan,Robert(Lanark,Govan
Fardell, Sir T. George
Fell, Arthur
Fletcher, J. S.
Forster, Henry William
Gardner, Ernest (Berks, East)
Gibbs, G. A. (Bristol, West)
Gill, A. H.
Gordon,SirW.Evans-(T'rHam
Hamilton, Marquess of
Hardie,JKeir(MerthyrTydvil)
HardieLaurence(KentAshford
Harrison-Broadley, Col. H. B.
Heaton, John Henniker
Helmsley, Viscount
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Hervey, FWF(Bury S.Edm'ds
Hill, Sir Clement(Shrewsbury)
Hill,HenryStaveley (Staff'sh.)
Hills, J. W.
Jenkins, J.
Kelly, George D.
Kenyon-Slaney,Rt.HonColW.
Lane-Fox, G. R.
Lee,ArthurH.(Hants.Fareham
Legge, Col. Hon.Heneage
Liddell, Henry
Lockwood Rt.Hn.Lt-Col.A.R.
Lowe, Sir Francis William
Macdonald, J. R. (Leicester)
Magnus, Sir Philip
Marks, Harry Hananel (Kent)
Mason, James F. (Windsor)
Mildmay, Francis Bingham
Morpeth, Viscount
O'Grady, J.
Parker,SirGilbert (Gravesend)
Parker, James (Halifax)
Pease,Herbert Pike(Darl'gt'n)
Percy, Earl
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Ratcliff, Major R. F.
Rawlinson, John Frederick P.
Remnant, James Farquharson

Richards,T.F.(Wolverh'mpt'n
Roberts, G. H. (Norwich)
Roberts, S (Sheffield, Ecclesall
Rothschild,Hon.LionelWalter
Rutherford, John (Lancashire)
Rutherford,W.W. (Liverpool)
Seddon, J.
Shackleton, David James
Smith, AbelH.(Hertford, East)
Stanley,HonArthur(Ormskirk
Starkey, John R.
Stone, Sir Benjamin
Summerbell, T.
Thomson, W.Mitchell(Lanark
Thornton, Percy M.
Turnour, Viscount
Vincent, Col. Sir C.E.Howard
Walrond, Hon. Lionel
Walsh, Stephen
Wardle, George J.
Williams, Col. R. (Dorset,W.)
Williamson, G. H. (Worcester)
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Wilson,A.Stanley(York,E.R.)
Wilson, W. T.(Westhoughton
Younger, George

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Viscount Valentia.

NOES.

Abraham,William(Cork,N.E.)
Acland, Francis Dyke
Agnew, George William
Ainsworth, John Stirling
Alden, Percy
Allen, Charles P. (Gloucester)
Armitage, R.
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Asquith,RtHonHerbertHenry
Balfour, Robert (Lanark)
Baring, Godfrey (Isle of Wight)
Barlow, John E. (Somerset)
Barlow, Percy (Bedford)
Barnard, E. B.
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Beale, W. P.
Beauchamp, E.
Beaumont,Hubert(Eastbourne
Beaumont, W. C.B. (Hexham)
Bell, Richard
Bellairs, Carlyon
Benn,JohnWilliams(Dev'np'rt
Benn,W.(T'w'rHamletsS.Geo.
Bennett, E. N.
Berridge, T. H. D.
Bethell, J.H. (Essex, Romford)
Bethell, T. R. (Essex, Maldon)
Billson, Alfred
Birrell, Rt. Hon. Augustine
Black,ArthurW.(Bedfordshire
Boland, John
Boulton, A. C. F. (Ramsey)
Bowerman, C. W.
Brace, William
Branch, James
Brigg, John
Bright, J. A.
Brodie, H. C.
Brooke, Stopford
Brunner,J.F.L.(Lancs.,Leigh)
Burke, E. Haviland
Burns, Rt. Hon. John
Burnyeat, J. D. W.
Burt, Rt. Hon. Thomas
Buxton,RtHonSydneyCharles
Byles, William Pollard
Cairns, Thomas
Caldwell, James
Cameron, Robert
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H.
Carr-Gomm, H. W.
Causton,RtHnRichardKnight
Cawley, Frederick
Chance, Frederick William
Channing, Francis Allston
Cheetham, John Frederick
Cherry, R. R.
Churchill, Winston Spencer
Clough, W.
Coats,Sir T.Glen (Renfrew,W)
Cogan, Denis J.
Collins,SirWm.J(S.PancrasW
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Cooper, G. J.
Corbett,C.H(Sussex,EGrinst'd
Cotton, Sir H. J. S.
Cox, Harold
Craig, Herbert J. (Tynemouth
Cremer, William Randal
Crombie, John William
Crossley, William J.
Cullinan, J.
Davies,M.Vaughan- (Cardigan
Delany, William
Devlin,Chas.Ramsay (Galway
Dewar, Arthur (Edinburgh,S.)
Dewar, John A. (Inverness-sh.
Dolan, Charles Joseph
Donelan, Captain A.
Duckworth, James
Duffy, William J.
Dunn, A. Edward (Camborne)
Dunne, Major E. M. (Walsall)
Edwards, Clement (Denbigh)
Edwards, Enoch (Hanley)
Edwards, Frank (Radnor)
Elibank, Master of
Ellis, Rt. Hon. John Edward
Erskine, David C.
Esmonde, Sir Thomas
Essex, R. W.
Evans, Samuel T.
Faber, G. H. (Boston)
Farrell, James Patrick
Fenwick, Charles
Ferens, T. R.
Ferguson, R. C. Munro
Fiennes, Hon. Eustace
Findlay, Alexander
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Flynn, James Christopher
Foster, Rt. Hon. Sir Walter
Fuller, J. M. F.
Fullerton, Hugh
Furness, Sir Christopher
Gardner, Col. A.(Herefordsh.S.
Gilhooly, James
Ginnell, L.
GladstoneRtHonHerbertJohn
Glendinning, R. G.
Glover, Thomas
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Gooch, George Peabody
Grant, Corrie
Greenwood, G. (Peterborough)
Greenwood, Hamar (York)
Grove, Archibald
Guest, Hon. Ivor Churchill
Gulland, John W.
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Haldane, Rt. Hon. Richard B.
Hall, Frederick
Halpin, J.
Hammond, John
Harcourt, Rt. Hon. Lewis
Harmsworth, Cecil B. (Worc'r)
Hart-Davies, T.
Harvey, A. G. C. (Rochdale)
Harwood, George
Haslam, James (Derbyshire)
Haslam, Lewis (Monmouth)
Hazel, Dr. A. E.
Healy, Timothy Michael
Hedges, A. Paget
Henry, Charles S.
Herbert,ColonelIvor (Mon.,S.)
Higham, John Sharp
Hobart, Sir Robert
Hobhouse, Charles E. H.
Hogan, Michael
Hooper, A. G.
Hope, John Deans (Fife, West)
Hope,W.Bateman(Somerset,N
Howard, Hon. Geoffrey
Hutton, Alfred Eddison
Idris, T. H. W.
Illingworth, Percy H.
Jacoby, James Alfred
Jardine, Sir J.
Johnson, W. (Nuneaton)
Jones,DavidBrynmor(Sw'nsea
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Jones,William (Canarvonshire
Joyce, Michael
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kennedy, Vincent Paul
Kilbride, Denis
Kincaid-Smith, Captain
King, Alfred John (Knutsford)
Laidlaw, Robert
Lamb,Edmund G.(Leominster
Lambert, George
Lamont, Norman
Law, Hugh Alexander
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Lea,Hugh Cecil(St.Pancras,E.
Lehmann, R. C.
Lever,A.Levy(Essex,Harwich
Lever,W.H.(Cheshire, Wirral)
Lewis, John Herbert
Lloyd-George, Rt. Hon. David
Lough, Thomas
Lundon, W.
Luttrell, Hugh Courtenay
Lynch, H. B.
Macdonald,J.M.(FalkirkB'ghs
Maclean, Donald
Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J.
MacNeil, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah(Down,S.
MacVeigh,Charles(Donegal,E.
M'Callum, John M.
M'Crae, George

M'Kenna, Reginald
M'Killop, W.
M'Laren, H. D. (Stafford, W.)
M'Micking, Major G.
Maddison, Frederick
Mansfield, H. Rendall (Lincoln
Marks, G, Croydon(Launceston
Marnham, F. J.
Mason, A. E. W. (Coventry)
Massie, J.
Masterman C. F. G.
Meehan, Patrick A.
Menzies, Walter
Micklem, Nathaniel
Molteno, Percy Alfred
Mond, A.
Money, L. G. Chiozza-
Montagu, E. S.
Morgan, G. Hay (Cornwall)
Morton, Alpheus Clephas
Murphy, John
Myer, Horatio
Napier, T. B.
Newnes, F. (Notts, Bassetlaw)
Nicholls, George
Nolan, Joseph
Norman, Henry
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
Nussey, Thomas Willans
Nuttall, Harry
O'Brien, Kendal(Tipp'raryMid
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Connor, James,(Wicklow, W.
O'Connor, John, (Kildare, N.)
O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
O'Doherty, Philip
O'Donnell, T. (Kerry, W.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, Conor (Mayo, N.)
O'Kelly, James(RoscommonN.
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
O'Shee, James John
Pearce, William (Limehouse)
Perks, Robert William
Philipps, Col. Ivor (S'thampton
Philipps, Owen C. (Pembroke)
Pollard, Dr.
Price, Robert John (Norfolk, E.
Priestley, W. E. B. (Bradford E.
Rainy, A. Rolland
Raphael, Herbert H.
Rea, Russell (Gloucester)
Redmond, William (Clare)
Rendall, Athelstan
Renton, Major Leslie
Richardson, A.
Ridsdale, E. A.
Robartes, Hon. T. C. A. (Bodmin
Roberts, Charles H. (Lincoln)
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Robertson, Rt. Hn. E. (Dundee
Robertson, J. M. (Tyneside)
Robertson, SirG Scott(Bradf'rd
Robinson, S.
Robson, Sir William Snowdon
Roche, John (Galway, East)
Rogers, F. E. Newman
Rose, Charles Day
Rowlands, J.
Runciman, Walter
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland
Scarisbrick, T. T. L.
Schawnn, Charles D. (Hyde)
Schawnn, C. E. (Manch'ster, N.
Scott, A. H. (Ashton underLyne
Seaverns, J. H.
Seely, Major J. B.
Shaw, Rt. Hon. T. (Hawick B.)
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Silcock, Thomas Ball
Sinclair, Rt. Hon. John
Smeaton, Donald Mackenzie
Smyth, Thomas (Leitrim, S.)
Soares, Ernest J.
Spicer, Albert
Stanley, Hn. A. Lyulph (Chesh.
Stewart, Halley (Greenock)
Strachey, Sir Edward
Sullivan, Donal
Sutherland, J. E.
Taylor, Austin (East Toxteth)
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
Tennant, E. P. (Salisbury)
Tennant, H. J. (Berwickshire)
Thomas, David Alfred(Merthyr
Tomkinson, James
Toulmin, George
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Vivian, Henry
Wadsworth, J.
Waldron, Laurence Ambrose
Walker, H. De R. (Leicester)
Walters, John Tudor
Walton, Sir John L. (Leeds, S.
Ward, John (Stoke upon Trent
Ward, W. Dudley (S'thampton
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Wason, Eugene (Clackmannan
Wason, John Cathcart(Orkney
Wedgwood, Josiah C.
Weir, James Galloway
Whitbread, Howard
White, George (Norfolk)
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
White, J. D. (Dumbartonshire
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Williams, J. (Glamorgan)
Williamson, A. (ElginandNairn
Wills, Arthur Walters
Wilson, Henry J. (York, W.R.
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid)
Wilson, J. W. (Worcestersh. N.
Wilson, P. W. (St. Pancras, S.
Winfrey, R.
Woodhouse, SirJ T(Huddersf'd
Young, Samuel
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Mr. George Whiteley and Mr. J. A. Pease.

SIR FRANCIS LOWE moved to omit the word "seven" in line 1, in order to insert the word "five." He said he desired to move this Amendment in order to give the right hon. Gentleman the Postmaster-General an opportunity to revert to his original proposition that there should be five Members on this Committee and of reconsidering the decision at which he had arrived not to allow an hon. Gentleman a Member of the Unionist Party to serve on the Committee. No good reason had been given for the opposition to the appointment of the hon. Member for Hoxton, who was in every way a most suitable Member to serve on the Committee and none the less so because he had voted with hon. Gentlemen opposite in favour of a Committee of inquiry when the appointment of such a Committee was proposed in the late Parliament. He did not see why his hon. friend should be disqualified from sitting on this Committee because he favoured an inquiry into the alleged grievances of the Post Office employes. In his view it was desirable that there should be some one on the Committee who was favourable to the position of the employes concerned. He begged to move.

*SIR W. EVANS GORDON (Tower Hamlets, Stepney), in seconding the Amendment, said that in the course of the debate which preceded the division the Prime Minister told the House that had the Postmaster-General realised or known that the name of the hon. Member for Hoxton had been formally handed in to serve on this Committee no objection would have been taken to the name but it would have been at once accepted. The late Patronage Secretary to the Treasury had told the House that a formal nomination had been made and if all the formalities had been gone through he could not understand on what possible ground the hon. Gentleman the Member for Hoxton had been objected to on this occasion. The general feeling on the Unionist side of the House was that the grounds given by the right hon. Gentleman were the thinnest that could possibly be alleged. The hon. Member for Hoxton had voted for this very Committee for years, and if that was a disqualification for serving upon it then all he could say was that that was a disqualification from which he in conjunction with all Members on the Liberal side of the House suffered who were Members of the last Parliament.

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out the word 'seven' in line 1 in order to insert the word 'five.'"—(*Sir Francis Lowe.*)

Question proposed, "That the word proposed to be left out stand part of the Question.

Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON said he was unable to accept the Amendment. After careful consideration he had come to the conclusion that it was better to have a larger Committee than five and to give the Committee of Selection the choice of the Members who were to sit upon it. If the Committee was composed of seven, two Members of the Party opposite would in all probability be appointed, and that ought to be satisfactory to hon. Gentlemen on that side of the House. The Committee of Selection was representative of the House, and so far as he was concerned he had never heard of the decisions of that body being objected to in any quarter. He thought it was quite safe to leave the selection of this Committee in their hands. The action he had taken of which complaint had been made was due to a misunderstanding between himself and the right hon. Gentleman opposite. He thought the conversations he had with the right hon. Gentleman were not official, but of a private character in regard to what had best be done. He had never said a word against the hon. Member for Hoxton except on the ground that the hon. Gentleman had taken a very great interest in this question, and that while that would not disqualify him from serving on a large Committee, or for that matter upon a small one, the size of the Committee did make a considerable difference in these matters. He hoped the House would agree to a Committee of seven, which upon reconsideration he considered to be a better number than five.

Lord BALCARRES (Lancashire, Chorley) admitted that the House had no fear that the Committee of Selection would fail to respect the rights of minorities, but that was not the point which they had to consider. What they had to consider was very different. The point had been stated in its most bald terms by the Prime Minister who, speaking for himself and the Government upon the objections to the hon. Member for Hoxton, said the hon. Member was not unbiassed in this matter. The right hon. Gentleman further said they wished to see a Committee which was free from any suspicion of prejudice and partiality, and therefore in his own words accused the hon. Member for Hoxton of being not free from the suspicion of partiality. The gravamen of the charge against the hon. Gentleman was that in this matter he was not impartial. In the past three sessions of the late Parliament this question of appointing a Select Committee to deal with the grievances of post office employees had been brought before the House. In the present Unionist Party there was only one Member who voted consistently in support of the complete claims of the postmen in that respect, and that was his hon. friend, and the only thing that could be alleged against the hon. Member was that he was too favourable to the claims of the postmen. That was the whole reason why the right hon. Gentleman the Postmaster-General had to exercise his veto in this matter. But if one hon. Member was disqualified on that ground the same objection would apply to all the members of the Liberal Party who were Members of the last Parliament, because they stood on precisely the same footing as the hon. Member. As regards those hon. Gentlemen who had entered Parliament for the first time, he thought he was fairly accurate when he said that they had given pretty specific pledges upon this matter to those who had sent them to the House. The right hon. Member had said the nomination of the hon. Member for Hoxton was not official, but unfortunately for him the right hon. Gentleman made the suggestion in a way so formal that he ventured to say so formal a nomination had never been made before. It was communicated upon paper, and it had never been withdrawn, and while that official document was in the pocket of the Postmaster-General that right hon. Gentleman was hanging about behind Mr. Speaker's chair asking Unionist Members to sit upon this Committee because he did not take the nomination of the Unionist Party. The position of the Whips, who had been designated as "Channels of communication between the Parties in the House" had not been treated with sufficient courtesy and care by the Postmaster-General. Members of the Unionist Party had complained that a member of the Government had asked them to join Committees which they had constantly opposed during the past five years. He said most distinctly that the right hon. Gentleman ought to have had more regard to the Patronage Secretary and still more to other hon. Gentlemen who, like himself, were the channels of communication between small, it might be almost insignificant, minorities and the very arge majority wielded by the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister. He was not going into the merits of this particular Amendment beyond saying that the Prime Minister had obviously made a grave mistake in tactics in not in the first place accepting the request of the Opposition to postpone the consideration of this subject until they could consider it in all its bearings. The Opposition were now going to be voted down by a gigantic majority, but the findings of the Committee, whatever they were, would be discounted in advance. The postal servants involved would have absolutely no confidence in the findings of a Committee in regard to the nomination of which the Postmaster-General, their official superior, had been criticised in so markedly unfriendly a spirit; and the very fact that he had publicly vetoed the appointment of an hon. Member on the Opposition Benches for the sole reason—the avowed reason—that that hon. Member was too favourable to the postmen's claim, would, in his opinion, make the findings absolutely worthless. Whether they nominated this Committee of five or seven members, whether they put the responsibility upon the Committee of Selection or retained to the House the appointment of the Committee, the findings would be worthless, owing to the unwarrantable action of the Postmaster-General in vetoing the appointment of his hon. friend.

THE PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY (Mr. GEORGE WHITELEY, Yorkshire, W.R., Pudsey) said he merely wanted to say one word with reference to the suggestion of the noble Lord that the Postmaster-General had treated the Whips' office with scant courtesy. He knew throughout the whole of the negotiations that had taken place what was going on, and he could assure the House that the matter had been unduly magnified, and that it was assuming larger proportions than it ever had any right to reach. There seemed to be an idea that the Postmaster-General had acted in a somewhat high-handed manner, that he had endeavoured to alter the ordinary procedure with regard to these Committees, and that he had taken advice of the numerical majority of the Government's supporters. He could assure the House that that was not the case. So far as he himself was concerned, and if the right hon. Baronet the Member for the Wellington Division of Somerset were present he would agree, they had endeavoured not only not to insist upon every advantage that they had a right to claim, recognising their large majority in the House, but they had endeavoured not to press that advantage unduly. At the very first opportunity he had of settling the numerical proportions of the Committees he informed the right hon. Baronet that they did not intend to press their advantage unduly, and, as a matter of fact, they agreed to give the Opposition 4 per cent. more representation on Select Committees than they were entitled to. They had a right to 23 per cent. and were getting 27 per cent.

AN HON. MEMBER asked whether, as the point was one of very great importance, the hon. Gentleman would state what constituted an official nomination.

MR. GEORGE WHITELEY said that an official nomination came from one Whip to another, generally in writing, and was accepted by the Whip receiving that nomination. There was no nomination whatever of that kind with regard to the hon. Member for Hoxton, but only the suggestion that perhaps he was a good Member to be appointed. There was no public veto, or any slur on the capacity of the hon. Member. If there had been a direct representation he should have at once said that the nomination of the Opposition must be immediately accepted, and they had no right to demur to it; but no such representation was made.

LORD WILLOUGHBY DE ERESBY (Lincolnshire, Horncastle) said there was a strong feeling on the Opposition side of the House with regard to this question. All who had listened to the debate must have come to the conclusion that there undoubtedly was a misunderstanding, but it was a matter of such considerable importance that he would make one further appeal to the Leader of the House, who had stated that he did not wish to set up a precedent in regard to this matter. The Postmaster-General had made a remark to the same effect. They fully recognised and wished to adhere to the old established rule of the House, that where a Committee was proposed to be set up there should be negotiations between official sources as to who should be appointed on the Committee. If the present point were not cleared up satisfactorily it might be quoted as a precedent at some future time, and he therefore most earnestly asked the Leader of the House once more to consider this question and to be true to the words he had used in his speech that he did not wish to establish a precedent. He appealed to the right hon. Gentleman not to establish that precedent.

SIR EDWARD CARSON (Dublin University) said he must confess that having listened to the debate from the commencement he was still at a loss to know why the name of the hon. Member for Hoxton was not accepted by the Postmaster-General, and he believed they had not yet got at the real reason. He said nothing whatever as regarded the Patronage Secretary. He was told that the Opposition Whips in every way recognised the chivalry and the manner in which the hon. Gentleman met the minority, but unfortunately he apparently allowed this matter to pass out of his hands, and so they were in the present position. As he understood the Postmaster General the right hon. Gentleman refused to accept the name of the hon. Member for Hoxton—at any rate, he did accept it. If the right hon. Gentleman liked to draw a distinction between accepting and not accepting he was quite welcome to do so. Why was the hon. Member not accepted? Because apparently he had given a vote in this House a particular way, or because he had identified himself with a particular side of the question. Yes, but the day after the Postmaster-General went to another member of the Opposition who had given a vote a particular way—but the other way—and who had identified himself with a particular side of the question—but with the other side of the question. The Postmaster-General must admit one of two things—either that he looked upon the possession of views on a particular side as a disqualification, or he thought that he had a right to form an objection to a particular name which was suggested by the Opposition Whip. Therefore, he repeated that they had not yet got the real reason why the name of the hon. Member for Hoxton was not accepted. He put this question to the Postmaster-General: how did he reconcile his asking a Member upon the Opposition side who was opposed to the Committee, and who had identified himself with the Opposition, to join the Committee, whereas he rejected, or did not accept, the name of one who did not oppose, and who had identified himself with the question? If it were not a question of the particular views or the particular action of the hon. Member, the House had a right to ask what was the reason for the rejection of the hon. Member for Hoxton.

SIR A. ACLAND-HOOD said that before the question was put he wished to state that the Postmaster-General asked him to nominate a member of the Committee and he gave him the name of the hon. Member for Hoxton. The right hon. Gentleman came to his room twice and asked him to find somebody else and he told him that he could not find anybody else.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON said it was quite true that the name suggested was that of the hon. Member for Hoxton. It must be quite clear to the House that under the circumstances he misunderstood the right hon. Gentleman, because he took the discussion as being of a private nature and not of an official character as if the right hon. Gentleman had said that the hon. Member for Hoxton was his nomination and he would suggest no other. He again apologised for the misunderstanding.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said that they understood how the misunderstanding arose, and his right hon. friend did not wish to charge the Postmaster-General with doing anything unbecoming a Minister in his position. There was one obvious lesson to be drawn from the debate, namely, that the arrangement of these Committees should be left to the Patronage Secretary, and that Cabinet Ministers should not interfere to assist or obstruct the Whips in the very efficient discharge of their duties. He wished to repeat his appeal to the Prime Minister. Surely there never was a more extraordinary position than that in which the House was now placed. He might have occasion later in the debate on another question to say something more about the proposal to appoint this Committee, but he would confine himself for the moment strictly to what had passed in the discussion. The Prime Minister admitted that a misunderstanding had arisen, that the Postmaster-General was not aware that an official nomination had been made, and that if he had been aware that an official nomination had been made it would have been improper for him to have objected to it, and the Committee as orignially proposed would have been appointed with the hon. Member for Hoxton as one of its members. There was no dispute that the misunderstanding was on the part of the Postmaster-General and not on the part of his right hon. friend who represented the Opposition side of the House. Before the Postmaster-General altered the form of his notice his right hon. friend had officially nominated in writing in the most formal way the hon. Member for Hoxton. There was no longer any dispute between the two Front Benches as to the position of the Patronage Secretary in the matter.

MR. GEORGE WHITELEY No communication whatever came to me.

SIR A. ACLAND-HOOD : I certainly told the hon. Member, if I did not state it in writing.

MR. GEORGE WHITELEY : No communication with regard to the setting up of this Committee was entered into between the right hon. Gentleman and myself, and I received no letter from the right hon. Gentleman.

SIR A. ACLAND-HOOD : I am quite certain that I handed in the name in writing.

MR. GEORGE WHITELEY : Not to me.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said the Post Office seemed to be in default in more ways than one. He was prepared to rest his case on the statement made by the Prime Minister, who said that there had been a misunderstanding and that if he had understood that an official nomination had been made he would not have allowed it to be altered or the form of the Committee to be changed. His hon. and learned friend the Member for the City of London had appealed to the Prime Minister to undo this misunderstanding, and it was quite within his power to do so; by a stroke of the pen he could remove this misunderstanding and restore the Motion to its original form, thus relieving the Opposition and others of the feeling that they were being ill-used in violation of the practice of the House. He appealed to the Prime Minister, as the guardian of the rights of the House, to undo the decision which had given rise to the misunderstanding and to restore them to the position in which they would have been if that misunderstanding had not arisen.

MR. SHACKLETON (Lancashire, Clitheroe) said that arising out of the debate were one or two important matters which should be nailed down. First of all he referred to the remarkable friendship displayed by the Opposition for the postmen this session as compared with last session. As one who had taken some little part in this controversy he knew the postmen would be very grateful for their support and he personally was also grateful for that support. What to his mind was more important than the decision that a Member's personal opinion on any matter should not be a bar to his selection to serve on a Committee was the declaration regarding minorities. He was one of a minority of about thirty in the House and he felt grateful at being told that in future the selection by a minority of any Member to serve on a Committee would be accepted by the Government. That position had been clearly stated this afternoon, for the Prime Minister had said that if he had known the Member for Hoxton was officially nominated there would have been no objection to his nomination. He rather favoured the suggestion made by the hon. and learned Member for the City of London. Let them consider this matter *de novo.* If the Government persisted in their present attitude it would be construed outside that a certain hon. Member had been refused nomination on this Committee because of his expressed opinions in past Parliaments. He felt that that was a very serious thing with which to start an important Committee of inquiry, and it would not tend to a satisfactory settlement of this much debated question. If it was intended that this Committee should be appointed by the Selection Committee he held that the Members should be increased to nine so that all Parties in the House could be represented. Under the present arrangement there was only one representative from the Unionist Opposition and the Labour party was entirely ignored.

MR. WILLIAM RUTHERFORD (Liverpool, West Derby) said he wished to say a word or two from the point of view of the postmen. The hon. Member for Hoxton and himself were two of those who in the last Parliament took a very active part on behalf of the postmen. His position was that if it went forth to these men for whom they had tried to do something, and whose part they had taken for years, that when this Committee was being appointed an hon. Member was to be disqualified because he had expressed views favourable to the claims of the postmen, it would be a most unfortunate incident. It would discount the advantages of the Committee and practically make it useless for the purpose of settling the discontent. For the last twenty years there had been seething discontent amongst a large body of men and women employed by the Post Office, and the Government had at last conceded the demand for a Committee of the House by this body of citizens. Therefore, if that Committee was to be appointed, it should be one in which the public department concerned and the service would have some reasonable confidence. They could not have confidence in a Committee if prejudice and suspicion were to be introduced, and there should be no interference with the personality of its members. He had not been able to agree with some of his hon. friends upon this point, for he had consistently advocated the claims of the postmen, and had spoken for them. He thought they were entitled to have this Committee appointed in a proper way, and it should be no bar to anyone's being appointed that he had ever declared himself in favour or against the postmen. He suggested to the Prime Minister that whether the Committee was appointed by the House or by the Committee of Selection, or whether it was to consist of five, seven, or nine members, the hon. Member for Hoxton should be one of that Committee, and that was the only condition that would satisfy those who shared his views upon this subject.

MR. SAMUEL ROBERTS (Sheffield, Ecclesall) said that what was wanted was an inquiry by a Committee appointed in the ordinary way, and not in the unprecedented way now being proposed. He appealed to the Prime Minister to reconsider the position. It would be a bad beginning if this Committee was appointed with so much dissension existing in the House. Would it not be better to appoint a Committee unanimously agreed to by both sides? If it went forth that this Committee had not been appointed by the unanimous wish of the House, it would not possess the confidence of the public. He hoped that the right hon. Gentleman would even at the last moment re-consider his decision in order that they might come to some agreement upon this question.

Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN said he agreed with the hon. Member that it would be most unfortunate if the proceedings of this Committee began with any serious difference of opinion in the House. They had got rid of any slur on the hon. Member for Hoxton; and they had got rid of any quarrel between the two Whips on the two sides of the House. He agreed that the best way of conducting the whole of these proceedings was through the Whips and not through Ministers. What should now be done? He spoke quite frankly when he said that he saw great advantages in a small Committee in a case of this sort, but he thought that if a small Committee were appointed it ought to be appointed by the Committee of Selection. He never heard anything of what had been done in regard to this matter, but if he had heard of it he should have suggested from the very first that the Committee ought not to be large and that it should be left to the Committee of Selection. The duties of the Committee would be almost judicial and almost administrative. Of course, in a preliminary degree they would be duties which were ordinarily undertaken by Members of the Executive, but the final authority must be this House. On that ground they ought to be very careful how they proceeded. He thought the suggestion of his hon friend below the gangway was a good one, namely, that the Committee should be increased to nine. That would give a larger choice and admit of a certain balancing of opinion in this judicial Committee To let the choice be made by the Committee of Selection would be more in accordance with his individual idea, but on the other hand, if it would satisfy Members of the House who criticised the proposed constitution of the Committee, he would be willing to agree that the Committee should consist of nine Members appointed by the Whips in the ordinary way. There would then be less chance of those little contests of individual Members than there would be in a smaller Committee. He was sure that they all had but one desire in the matter, namely, that, on the one hand, the Committee should be appointed without a prejudice against it, and on the other hand that there should be no prejudice in the minds of the hon. Members themselves. If that would meet the views of the House the Government would be happy to agree to it.

Sir FRANCIS LOWE asked leave to withdraw the Amendment.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Original Question again proposed.

Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN suggested that the discussion should be adjourned in order that the Committee might be proposed in the usual form.

Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON said he understood that general assent would be given to the proposal that there should be a Committee of nine, and that the words "to be nominated by the Committee of Selection" should be omitted.

Amendments proposed and agreed to—

"In line 1, to leave out the word 'seven' and insert the word 'nine'"; and

"In line 2, to leave out the words 'to be nominated by the Committee of Selection.'" —(*Mr. Sydney Buxton.*)

Original Question, as amended, again proposed.

Mr. WILLIAM RUTHERFORD said he should like to know from the Postmaster-General why the supervising and clerical force, and those in the engineering stores and factories departments and the sub-postmasters, were to be excluded from the scope of the Committee's inquiries. There were many thousands of sub-postmasters, and the engineering department was a very important one.

There had been grievances in these departments, and when the subject was being inquired into, was there any sense in leaving them out? He thought they should all be included. When it was known that they had grievances it was rather invidious to leave them out. He moved the omission of the words in line 4, "other than the supervising of the clerical force, and those in the engineering stores and factories departments."

Amendment proposed—

"In line 4, to leave out the words 'other than the supervising and clerical force, and those in the engineering, stores and factories departments.'"—(*Mr. William Rutherford.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON said the hon. Member would find from the notice that the "unestablished sub-postmasters" were included. As to the engineering department it was quite obvious that the Committee, however constituted, would have a very heavy task before it, and it appeared to him that if every rank were included the Committee would not be able to report in a reasonable limit of time. The classes referred to by the hon. Member were in a different position from that of the ordinary postal servants, and though he did not say that their case did not require consideration, he thought it was not suitable to refer it to this particular Committee. As to the other departments, he had already received information of their case from the men, and he hoped to be able to come to some conclusion which would be satisfactory to them.

Sir EDWARD CARSON understood that complaints had been made quite as much by those in the departments which the Postmaster-General proposed to omit as by others. The right hon. Gentleman had himself admitted that they had certain grievances that ought to be inquired into. The only reason why he proposed to omit them was that the work of the Committee would be too great if they were included. He was afraid the right hon. Gentleman would find that that was a very unsatisfactory statement for the classes he proposed to omit. Did the right hon. Gentleman propose with regard to the other employees of the Post Office to set up a Committee—either a Departmental Committee or a House of Commons Committee? Of course, if he did, that would meet the matter raised by the Amendment of his hon. friend. He thought the right hon. Gentleman would have very great difficulty with the servants in the Post Office if for no other reason except that there would be too much work thrown on the Committee he refused to allow their grievances to be inquired into by the Committee proposed to be set up. Certain members of the Party to which he belonged had all through opposed the appointment of a Committee, but he thought if a Committee were to inquire into this matter at all they ought to have a complete inquiry into the whole of the grievances. If they inquired into the grievances of some classes of servants and left out others, the last state of the Post Office would be worse than the first. He hoped that some other answer than that already given would be forthcoming before they voted on the Amendment.

Sir FRANCIS LOWE agreed with the right hon. and learned Gentleman as to the desirability of the inquiry being thorough. He believed that if all the grievances were gone into, the Post Office employees would be willing to accept the verdict of this Committee as a final solution of the difficulty. If certain classes were left out of the inquiry, it would prevent this very desirable result from being arrived at. He joined in the appeal made to the Postmaster-General to reconsider this question.

Sir HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield Central) expressed the hope that the Postmaster-General would accept the Amendment. If the inquiry were entered upon and certain classes left out, there would be nothing but dissatisfaction, They would not be able to understand the reason for their exemption. If the right hon. Gentleman was not able to accept the Amendment, would it not be better to withdraw the Motion altogether and put it down another day after the right hon. Gentleman had had a consultation with the permanent heads of the Department? It was quite evident that there was a great deal of dissatisfaction in all parts of the House with this Motion, and it would be well if the Government could come to an arrangement to which the whole House could agree.

Question put.

A Division was called and when hon. Members had returned to their places to hear the Question again put by Mr. Speaker,

Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON, sitting in his place with his hat on, said he would accept the Amendment on condition that the words "other than the supervising and clerical force" were inserted afterwards.

*Mr. SPEAKER said that he had waited a considerable time before rising to put the Question, and he was afraid that having once put the Question and ordered the House to be cleared, he could not now put a different Question.

Question, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question," put, and negatived.

Main Question, as amended, put, and agreed to.

Ordered, That a Select Committee of nine Members be appointed to inquire into the wages and position of the principal classes of Post Office servants, and also of the unestablished subpostmasters.

To examine, so far as may be necessary for the purpose of their Report, the conditions of employment of these classes.

To report whether, having regard to the conditions and prospects of their employment, and, as far as may be, to the standard rate of wages and the position of other classes of workers, the remuneration they receive is adequate or otherwise.

Ordered, That the Committee have power to send for persons, papers and records.—(*Mr. Sydney Buxton.*)

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That three be the quorum."—(*Mr. Sydney Buxton.*)

Sir FRANCIS LOWE moved to leave ous "three" in order to insert "five."

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out the word 'Three,' and insert the word 'Five.'"—(*Sir Francis Lowe.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'Three' stand part of the Question."

Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON thought that in a Committee of this sort, which would have to sit for a considerable number of days, there should be a quorum of four. He moved accordingly.

Sir FRANCIS LOWE asked, by leave, to withdraw his Amendment.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Amendment proposed, and agreed to—

"To leave out the word 'Three' and insert the word 'Four.'"—(*Mr Sydney Buxton.*)

Main Question, as amended, put, and agreed to.

Ordered, That four be the quorum.

NOTICE OF ACCIDENTS BILL.

Order for Second Reading read.

The UNDER-SECRETARY of STATE for the HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. Herbert Samuel, Yorkshire, Cleveland) said that the question which he was now about to bring before the House would not excite the keen interest and warm feeling and he hoped would not take so long a time as that which had just been disposed of. The Bill the Second Reading of which he now moved was entirely of a departmental and non-controversial nature. The Bill was, in substance, the same as that which was introduced last year by his predecessor, the hon. Member for North Ayrshire; and he understood that the hon. Members below the gangway opposite approved its main provisions. The present law in regard to the notification of accidents was somewhat complicated. There were different statutes regulating different industries. Accidents on ship-board were covered by the Merchant Shipping Act, and stood on a different footing from those dealt with by the Bill, and were therefore left untouched by it. Accidents on railways had to be reported to the Board of Trade, and if this Bill passed the Board of Trade would modify their regulations in accordance with the provisions of the Act. The measure dealt almost entirely with mines and quarries on the one hand, and with factories and workshops on the other. The present law in regard to mines and quarries was divided into three categories, all of which were reportable to the mines' inspectors. In the first place, there were fatal accidents; secondly, there were non-fatal accidents which arose from special causes, such as explosions, which occasioned any personal injury whatever to any person employed in or about the mine; and third, accidents which arose from any other cause and gave rise to serious personal injury. No exact definition was given in the Acts in force to the term "serious personal injury." Every mine manager was at liberty to form his own opinion as to what he regarded as serious personal injury. The result was that there was an infinite variety of opinion as to the class of accidents which had to be reported. As a matter of fact, only a very small percentage of accidents which most persons would consider serious, which took place in mines and quarries, ever came to the notice of the mines inspectors. There were now 6,000 accidents reported every year; but it was calculated that if every accident which incapacitated a miner for a fortnight were reported, instead of 6,000 a year there would be 75,000 reported; and if every accident which incapacitated a miner for a week were reported these would amount to 100,000. The fact that only 6,000 were reported showed that the law was seriously deficient and that there was no proper and adequate system of notification of accidents in mines. The effect of this also was that the returns were quite valueless for statistical purposes since the classes of accidents reported as being serious differed from mine to mine and from district to district. Further, a conscientious mine manager who honestly tried to report every accident that might be reasonably considered to be serious was thereby prejudiced, for his return seemed to show that his mine was more dangerous or that the safety of the miners was less regarded than in the mines of his neighbour who had not been so conscientious in making his accident report. Changes in the methods of the industry made it necessary to add to the category of special causes of accidents which were to be reported. He proposed to leave the reporting of fatal accidents in mines in the same position as it now stood, since no defects existed in that regard. As to special causes the House would remember that the law necessitated the reporting of all accidents arising from them, whether the accidents were serious or not. In this category it was proposed to add accidents caused by electricity, such as electric shock or burn; because such accidents, however slight they might be, might when investigated show defects in the electrical equipment of a mine, which the inspector should be aware of, because they might result in very grave accidents or mining explosions. In the Bill was a clause under which power was given to the Secretary of State to add other special causes as the changed circumstances of the industry might require. Then the term "serious injury" was more closely defined in the Bill, and, lastly, with regard to mines a completely new class of reportable accidents was established. All accidents which caused any serious personal injury, according to the definition of the Bill, or caused an injury sufficiently serious to incapacitate the miner for a specified length of time ought to be reported in the annual return to the Mines Department. The incapacity which was suggested in the Bill was a period of fourteen days, but that period was inserted in italics, and was only a provisional figure. The Government were by no means wedded to that figure, and if hon. Members regarded that term as too long, he should be very glad to meet them in a sympathetic spirit. He was sure hon. Members would realise that the proposals made by this Bill with regard to the reporting of accidents in mines would mean a very considerable improvement in the law and enable statistics to fulfil far more completely than hitherto the purpose which the House had in view in requiring their collection. With regard to factories and workshops, the present law required all accidents to be reported which fell within one of three categories. First, there were fatal accidents, which must be reported to the inspector and the certifying surgeon. Second, non-fatal accidents from special causes—machinery in motion, hot liquid, molten metal, explosives, and so forth—which were to be reported to the inspector and surgeon, if there was incapacity for five hours in one of the three days following the accident. Thirdly, there were accidents arising from all other causes and which resulted in disablement for five hours in one of three days following the accident, and these were reported to the inspector only, and not also to the certifying surgeon. The defects which had become apparent in the law, as regarded factories and workshops, with regard to special causes—accidents from machinery in motion, molten metal, and the like—were that frequently accidents occurred which at first sight seemed to be slight and trivial but which after a time developed into very serious accidents indeed. These included poisoning injuries and injuries of other kinds, which might not show their effects within three days of the accident. It frequently happened that the factory inspector had no knowledge whatever and was never informed of serious accidents, because their full seriousness had not been displayed within three days after the accident. Then there was this complicated provision as to five hours within one of the three days, which set up an intricate arithmetical problem, which had resulted in continual misunderstandings. This provision had given rise to an immense amount of correspondence between factory inspectors and owners of factories and workshops. As it had given rise to considerable difficulty it had been thought desirable to amend it. Then again electric shocks and burns were omitted from the category of special causes, although they might well come within that category, and there was no power in the Secretary of State to add other special causes from time to time. They proposed by this Bill to sweep away the provision about five hours in one of three days and to make the accident notifiable if it incapacitated the workman or workwoman for a period of one clear day at any time subsequent to the accident. Then they proposed to add to accidents caused by special causes those which were the result of electric shock or burns, and they gave power to the Secretary of State to add other causes to that category also. The last proposal of the Bill was intended to relieve the Factory Department from the overwhelming burden of entirely useless clerical work which was now cast upon them by the necessity to report, apart from the accidents which occurred from special causes—machinery in motion and so forth—a third class of accident, those arising from any mischance whatever which caused incapacity for a period of five hours. The result was that the factory inspectors were overwhelmed with reports of tens of thousands of trivial accidents which were quite unpreventable by any regulations. In 1895 there were 10,000 accidents reported, in 1900, 68,000, and in 1905 over 90,000.

MR. H. J. TENNANT (Berwickshire): Was there a change of the law ?

MR. HERBERT SAMUEL replied in the affirmative and said there was the Act of 1895, which, for the first time, brought these trivial accidents within the scope of the law and which led to the increase. It was not because there was any large increase in the number of accidents that occurred or that the industries were more dangerous, or that the employers were less careful in fencing the machinery; but the figures were swollen by the fact that more accidents were reported. These were Blue-book accidents. The reporting of them involved a very serious amount of clerical work and prevented the inspectors from concentrating their attention upon serious accidents which were overlaid and concealed. Haphazard he picked up the list of accidents in the South London district on one day, the 16th of November, 1905. The number was eighteen and and among them were the following:—

"Boy—slipped on iron when walking—cut hand. Labourer—unloading van—cut hand on broken barrel hoop. Labourer—walking—knocked foot—bruised toe. Box maker—scraping off glue—knife slipped—cut thumb. Packer—getting out straw—fell—bruised. Labourer—loading van—slipped and fell—hurt ankle. Assistant—stepping on box—lid gave way—shoulder grazed. Labourer—lacing up boot—joint slipped—toe hurt."

These were of no use either as statistics or for inducing inspection. What use to the Department was a notification of the fact that a man was kicked harnessing a horse. Yet these figures were reported to the district inspector, then to the superintending inspector, and then went on to the statistical branch, and this occurred in regard to tens of thousands of cases from every place all over the country. No matter if the staff of factory inspectors was doubled, they could do much better work in the factories and workshops than in their offices, examining these trivial reports in regard to injuries that disabled for a peroid of five hours. It was still proposed to retain the reports even of slight accidents in regard to machinery or from explosives, because a trivial accident in those cases might reveal a grave danger. They, therefore, proposed to say that if there was incapacity for a period of one day from an accident arising from machinery or explosion it should still be reported to the inspector and the certifying surgeon, but that in other cases there should be incapacity for a considerably longer period than the law now required before a report was demanded. The Government suggested a period of fourteen days, but here again if that period was thought too long he should be ready to consider sympathetically a suggestion for its reduction. In the Bill of last year it was proposed to make also an alteration in the *status* of certifying surgeons, which was one more of form than of substance. It was not intended to reduce the amount of work done by the certifying surgeons, but they thought their position—and their emoluments—would be affected. As there was much opposition, and as no material point was involved, it was thought better to omit that particular provision from the Bill. The Bill, as the House would see, dealt only with comparatively small points of detail, a debate upon which could be most conveniently taken in Committee. He should propose that the Bill should be referred to the Grand Committee on Trade, and he hoped the House would grant him the Second Reading of the Bill which he now begged to move.

Motion made and Question proposed, "That this Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Herbert Samuel.*)

*MR. COCHRANE (Ayrshire, N.) said he took some interest in this Bill, which, as had been said, embodied many of the provisions of the measure which he had the honour to lay before the House last session. He congratulated the Under-Secretary upon the extreme clearness with which he had stated the case: he had done so with a wealth of illustration, which must have convinced the House that the present system of notifying accidents needed investigation and amendment. All sorts of cases such as the grazing of a shoulder or one incurred in regard to the lacing of boots had been reported as accidents to the Government Department. These cases were present in the mind of his right hon. friend the late Home Secretary when he appointed a Departmental Committee to consider the question, and that Committee issued a Departmental Report which contained the evidence upon which this Bill was framed. The inquiry was very thorough and full and had brought out the purposes which were served by notification. In the first place, it was desirable by means of notification to call attention at the earliest possible moment to accidents caused by machinery and explosions, as it was desirable that at the earliest possible moment the attention of His Majesty's inspectors of factories should be directed to seeing whether machinery was properly or improperly fenced, in order that they might take all the necessary precautions to preserve the lives of the workers of this country. The information was also desired for statistical purposes, as it was of importance to the country that we should have a general knowledge of the class of accident which took place, and that general knowledge could be obtained only by inquiring into the various causes of accidents, and of the means by which the dangers could be met. Where the statistics had been overladen by a mass of trivial and irrelevant detail it was impossible to sift them so that they could be made useful. Some standard of reportability was required, and he thought a good selection had been made of the information which was required to guide them. The Report of the Committee said that the information should be precise in character, proceed upon some standard, and embrace a wide range of accidents, although it was possible to make the range too wide. He thought the hon. Gentlemen had tried to meet the point. The object of this Bill was twofold—to introduce a more complete system of reporting accidents in mines and quarries, and to simplify and render more effective the present system of reporting accidents in factories and other places under the Factory Act. As the Under-Secretary had pointed out, the present requirements in respect to mines and quarries were exceedingly defective. It was difficult to define what was a "serious personal injury." The Reports issued in 1904 in respect of reportable accidents in mines and quarries showed that 5,312 people were injured and 1,202 killed. But other statistics had been put forward showing that at least 75,000 accidents had occurred in mines and quarries, many of which ought also to be reportable. The Bill proposed that all accidents which disabled a man for more than fourteen days should be annually reported; the Under-Secretary of State had stated that when in Committee he should propose that that time should be changed, but he ventured to submit that the fourteen days should remain as the standard, because it would be incidentally an advantage to gather accurate statistics for the purposes of the Workman's Compensation Act. He quite admitted, however, that that was a detail that could be threshed out in Committee, there being no great principle involved; therefore, he took no hard and fast line upon that. As regarded the reportability of accidents in factories, the present law was that if a man was absent for five hours on any of the three following days after the accident, the accident must be reported. That requirement was a difficult one because it was difficult to understand what view to take in cases where the result of the accident did not develop until some days afterwards. Such a requirement necessitated the reporting of a number of trivial accidents, and when the House realised that the inspectors were overwhelmed, that in one year, they were inundated with 90,000 cases of which the greater number were trivial, they would see the value of the statistics gathered by them, and the possibility of their attending to each case was completely put on one side and rendered nugatory by the great number of trivial cases which they were called upon at the same time to consider. In this there was room for improvement, but when the hon. Gentleman suggested that an accident should be reportable which prevented a man or woman from being present at their work on any day, he suggested it would be well to fix some reasonable date after which it should not be taken into consideration. If, for instance, a man met with some trifling accident and six months after suffered from a bad headache which he said was the result of the accident the case should not be considered as one necessarily to be notified. Otherwise the proposal was one that would commend itself to the House. The objects of the Bill as set out in the memorandum were well worthy of the consideration of the House. They were—

> "To substitute the simple and clear standard of one whole day's absence for the present complicated standard in the case of the important classes of accidents such as accidents from machinery, etc.
>
> "To abolish the limitation to the three days following the accident so as to make an accident reportable whenever the day's absence occurs;
>
> "Other minor improvements effected by the Bill are the requirement that reports shall be made on the form and contain the particulars prescribed by the Secretary of State; the increase of the maximum penalty for failure to report under the Factory Act from £5 to £10, etc."

There was one other point to which the hon. Gentleman had referred, namely, the question of certifying surgeons. There had been some unnecessary alarm created among the certifying surgeons, who thought their sphere of influence was to be curtailed by this Bill, but in his opinion that alarm was unfounded. The Bill proposed was one that was contemplated by the late Government, but the exigencies of political life made it impossible to proceed with it last session, and he was glad it was now introduced. He thought the proposal to send it to a Committee was a very wise one.

MR. MYER (Lambeth, N.) said he should very much like to see a change in our system of factory inspection. He should like to see working men made factory inspectors, men who understood machinery and the methods of working. Very often they knew the reason why an explosion occurred and why a man injured one day might be very well for perhaps a fortnight and then suddenly develop a poisoned hand or foot in consequence of the injury he had received. They also knew very often why machines were faulty, and whether machines were properly guarded or not. They knew the conditions under which men worked, and he certainly hoped that in the Bill some arrangement would be made for changing the classes of factory inspectors.

MR. GLOVER (St. Helens) said he wished to thank the Government for bringing in this important measure. Many Members had thought in the past that a large number of accidents in the mines of this country had not been properly reported or that a large number were not reported, and they were therefore very pleased that a measure had been introduced which made it compulsory to report all accidents. Under the Mines Act those responsible for reporting accidents were only required to report such as were of a serious nature, and it was owing to that fact that there had not been more than 6,000 accidents reported to the inspector of mines during the past year. What was required was that all accidents should be reported in order that an accurate return might be made of all the accidents that took place. He understood that the chief reason for reporting these accidents was in order that the inspectors might visit the place where a serious accident had occurred for the purpose, if possible, of trying to prevent accidents of the same kind occurring in the future. He was not going to complain with regard to the staff of inspectors of mines who were at present engaged in this kind of work, but he would like to point out that, owing to the large number of accidents which took place, it was impossible for the inspectors of mines to make any inspection of the mines generally, which ought to be done in order that accidents might be prevented, instead of the inspector merely going to look at the place where an accident had occurred. More inspectors of mines ought to be appointed. He and his hon. friends would like to see at least one inspector or sub-inspector to every 10,000 employed. They were pleased that the Government had brought in the Bill, because they thought that if the accidents were reported daily it would certainly bring to the public mind the serious conditions under which the miners of the country had to work. It had been said that if all the accidents had been reported there would have been at least 100,000, but he ventured to say that that was a long way below the mark. There had been, he ventured to say, over 150,000 accidents during the last year, and the only way whereby they could get at the statistics and reports was by taking the information from the relief societies. Every accident was reported to these societies, and they could find out from them the number of accidents which took place. When he said that these societies' reports showed that an accident occurred to every five employed in the mines, it would be seen that the number came to something near what he had stated. He was pleased to see that the Bill was a great advance with regard to the nature of the accidents to be reported on the Mines' Regulation Act as it at present stood. There was, for instance, the question of electricity and electric shocks. Not very long ago in the district from which he came they were under the impression that it would be impossible for an accident to occur in connection with the electric supply in mines, but a youth came into contact with the cables in the mines and it caused his death. They therefore thought the Bill was a step in the right direction. The accidents ought to be reported when they occurred. It was stated that the accident should be reported if it prevented the workman returning to his work within fourteen days, but he would suggest that it should be altered to three days. If an accident was of such a character as to prevent a workman from returning to his work after three days, it certainly ought to be reported. He trusted that three days would be substituted for fourteen days. A previous speaker had said that he hoped the fourteen days would be kept in because it would coincide with the Workmen's Compensation Act, but they hoped that it would be made three days and that there would be an amendment of the Workmen's Compensation Act so that the workman should receive compensation if he was unable to return to his work three days after the occurrence of the accident. He hoped therefore the Government would see their way clear to insert three days instead of fourteen days. He thanked the Government for bringing in the measure, and he trusted it would pass its Second Reading and become law this session.

MR. H. J. TENNANT (Berwickshire) said he was in agreement with others who had spoken in the debate about several matters, particularly with regard to the statement made by the hon. Member for North Ayrshire as to the lucidity of the speech of his hon. friend who introduced this Bill. He thought those who had studied this question would admit that the position of the law was at the present time in a very confused and complicated state, and that being so, there was a fair case for the introduction of some amending measure. He did not wish to commit himself to all the details of the Bill, because it might be that he would have to move certain Amendments in the Committee stage, but in the main he thought the Bill travelled on the right lines. As regarded the usefulness of the Bill in the matter of statistics, he was not at all sure that an alteration of the law was in the interest of that branch of the subject. It must also be observed that if the Bill were carried into law, it would have the effect of enormously increasing the number of accidents reported under the Mines Act, and, on the other hand, of diminishing greatly the number of accidents reported under the Factories and Workshops' Act. He agreed with his hon. friend that there were at present too many trivial accidents reported, which complicated the work and cost a great deal of time and money, and it would be well if they could hit upon a system by which only those accidents which were of serious moment should be reported to the Factory Department. As regarded the time for which accidents had to be reported, it was announced that the law relating to workmen's compensation was going to be altered, and he only hoped the periods would be made to correspond. He welcomed this Bill primarily because he believed it would leave the inspectors of factories more time to devote to most pressing duties.

MR. STUART WORTLEY (Sheffield, Hallam) said he regarded the Bill as welcome, but he wished to raise a point on behalf of railway companies, which stood in rather a special position. They had no desire to evade any duty imposed upon them by this House, and they had as much interest as anyone else in the reliability of statistics, because the information given to the Government was just as valuable to the undertakers of great enterprises as it was to the Government itself. Railway companies were not entirely outside the Bill, notwithstanding the impression which had been created that they were, because railway companies had not only working lines but also very large factories, and between these two kinds of installations they had sidings and lines which connected a railway with a factory, and sometimes also with a mine. In some cases the siding might belong to the owner of the factory, and in others to the railway company, and what he wished to enforce was that it was a just claim on the part of railway companies that they should not be bound to submit to the jurisdiction of and to make reports to two different Government departments in respect of one part of their undertaking. Let the factories which belonged to railways be quite separate and the same with regard to railroads. It would be an injustice if they were subjected to embarrassing conditions with regard to inspection as to accidents which arose on some part of their undertaking which it was difficult to allot to any particular department of the State. He felt sure the hon. Gentleman desired to make this point clear, and perhaps he would give the House some assurance on the point before the Second Reading of the Bill.

*Mr. GILL (Bolton) said he quite agreed with the change proposed by this Bill. He knew several cases where the present law had been evaded. He had known instances where a person had been injured in such a way that he could not come under the Act because he was compelled to stop at his work at the time although through the injury he had been compelled to go away afterwards. In such a case no report under the present law was necessary. If this Bill was carried and the person went away there would be a necessity to report it. He thought the increasing of the penalty to £10 was a very useful provision. A number of accidents which took place did not develop during the three days fixed by the Act. He knew an instance where an apparently trivial accident had taken place, and the person had gone on working for a week or two, and then ill effects had set in, and he was compelled to go off his work. He remembered a case where an operative spinner, working, as was the custom, with bare feet, got a little bit of iron in his foot; it afterwards had to be taken out and blood poisoning followed, with the result that he lost his toe and was permanently incapacitated. They wanted to prevent accidents, and if the reporting took place when the injured persons had been off one day, it might result in more fencing of machinery and the adoption of greater safeguards. There had been a great alteration in this respect since the passing of the Compensation Act. He knew one firm which had spent £6,000 in this way. Accidents had been reduced very largely in consequence of these precautions having been taken. The result of the passage of the Workmen's Compensation Act was that a much greater number of accidents had been reported. In the society with which he was connected he had dealt with 1,300 cases under the Workmen's Compensation Act, and there were a very large number of trivial accidents which had not compelled the operative to be off work for fourteen days. He did not altogether agree with the clause which required fourteen days to elapse before a simple accident was reported; in his opinion that period was too long. There were many simple accidents, and the period should not be longer than three days. He did not wish to raise any prejudice on this point in regard to the Workmen's Compensation Bill which was to be introduced. The period in that Act was also too long, and there was much feeling amongst the working classes that the compensation ought to be from the date of accident. The Labour Members intended to try and get that period reduced. He thanked the House for listening to him. He was prepared to support the Second Reading, and would endeavour to get the alterations he had alluded to made in Committee.

Mr. J. WARD (Stoke-on-Trent) said he rose to support the Bill before the House. He desired in the first place to get from the Under-Secretary a guarantee that under this Act the workmen would not be placed in any worse position than they were under the Industrial Accidents Act of 1894. [An Hon Member: They will be in a better position.] He did not think so. The Labour Party and the trade union representatives in this House were not so anxious to get statistical tables, for that was only a very trivial side of the question. They had discovered that so far as the application of the Industrial Accidents Act of 1894 was concerned, the compulsory reporting of accidents and the trouble which it caused to employers had tended to lessen the number of accidents, and that was the principal reason why they were supporting the Bill now before the House. There was another clause in the Act of 1894 which ought to apply and be included in this Act, and that was the provision under which, when in the opinion of the Board of Trade an accident was of sufficient importance to justify that course being taken, they had power to hold a statutory inquiry into the causes and circumstances of the accident. He thought a provision of that kind ought to be included in this Bill, because otherwise the correct information as to the cause of the accident was often hidden, and there was no possibility of getting a correct statement of the circumstances under which the accident had occurred.

Such inquiries enabled them to take the necessary precautions to avoid similar accidents in the future. He agreed with the hon. Member for Bolton as to the necessity of being careful in a measure dealing with industrial questions that they did not prejudge the case in the future, and the Industrial Accidents Act of 1894 was a peculiarly sinister illustration. Nearly all the trouble under the present Workmen's Compensation Act was due to the fact that the promoters of the Workmen's Compensation Act lifted into it the schedule so far as it applied to engineering works and put it into the Act and made it apply to circumstances entirely different. The well-known instance of the buildings exceeding thirty feet in height he might mention, for it had caused endless confusion. Consequently he wished to be certain that in the passing of this measure, and by including the period of fourteen days, they were not committing themselves to that period as applied to the proposed Workmen's Compensation Act which they expected the Government to produce very shortly.

MR. HAVELOCK WILSON (Middlesborough) said he joined with his colleagues in congratulating the Government upon the production of this Bill, but he had to complain that there was no mention in it of ships or seamen. It was a fact that there was no record kept or any reports sent to any Government Department of accidents on board ship.

MR. HERBERT SAMUEL reminded the hon. Member that this point could be dealt with upon the proposed amendment to the Merchant Shipping Act.

MR. HAVELOCK WILSON said he did not agree with the hon. Member. He wished to remind him that a ship was a factory when it was alongside the quay, and he would like to make her a factory all round the world, because the Home Office was a good deal more liberal in their dealings with legislation affecting working men than the Board of Trade. Not that he wanted to set up any competition in this respect between those two departments, but he thought there ought to be some provision made for reporting accidents on board ship. He was aware that accidents were supposed to be recorded in the official log of the vessel, but he would remind the House that very often ships went away on voyages of three years duration,and no report of any accidents were sent to any Government Department until the end of the voyage, and then of course the log book was handed in to the Board of Trade. He thought it would tend to make matters more safe on board ship if immediately the ship arrived in another port a report of any accident had to be sent on either to the Board of Trade or the Home Office. If the Home Office could bring ships within the scope of this Bill he should be very thankful. In cases of fatal accidents a proper report was sent immediately after the occurrence from the first port of arrival, but this was not done in the case of non-fatal accidents.

MR. SAMUEL EVANS (Glamorganshire, Mid) said he desired to say a few words in reference to mines, and make one or two references to the manner in which the Bill had been drafted. He entirely approved of Section 1 which provided that the Home Office should obtain more statistical information with reference to accidents which took place in mines and quarries. With regard to Section 2 the object was a different one. Section 2 extended the obligation with reference to mines and quarries. That was all to the good, and he hoped it would have the effect of causing more care to be taken in dangerous places to secure the safety of the lives and limbs of those engaged there. For years in this House he had called attention to the system of legislation by referring to previous Acts, and he had urged that it should, if possible, be avoided. The hon. Member opposite had referred to the difficulty which had been experienced in the working of the Workmen's Compensation Act in consequence of that form of drafting. The result had been that every Court in the realm had said that the Act was a conundrum. He asked the House to consider what the Home Office had done in this case. The Bill now before the House had only six sections altogether. The first section referred to two sections of previous Acts—one passed in 1887 and the other in 1875—and it provided that these sections—

> "Shall be read as if the matters to be specified in the returns to be given under those sections respectively included a statement containing such particulars as the Secretary of State may prescribe of all accidents which occurred in or about the mine or quarry during the year to which the return relates, and disabled for more than fourteen days any person employed in or about the mine or quarry from working at his ordinary work."

Therefore it was impossible to construe Section 1 of this Bill without referring to the two Acts mentioned in it. Section 2 of this Bill said—

> "Section 35 of the Coal Mines Regulation Act, 1887, shall be read as if the following sub-section were substituted for Subsection 1 of that section. . . . The same subsection shall be substituted for so much of Section 11 of the Metalliferous Mines Act, 1872, as is repealed by this Act, both as respects the application of that section to metalliferous mines and as respects its application to quarries."

Then they had to refer to the Schedule and see what the section of the Act of 1872 said. He challenged anybody who was not fairly skilled in statutory construction to read with any intelligence this kind of legislation. Section 3 said—

> "Where any line or siding, not being part of a railway within the meaning of the Railway Employment (Prevention of Accidents) Act, 1900, is used in connection with a mine or quarry, the provisions of the Coal Mines Regulation Acts, 1887 to 1896, and of the Metalliferous Mines Regulation Acts, 1872 and 1875, as respectively amended by this Act with respect to returns and notification of accidents shall have effect as if the line or siding were part of the mine or quarry."

It was perfectly easy to say in an Act of Parliament what the meaning of a section was. Section 5 of this Bill said—

> "Section 1 of the Notice of Accidents Act, 1894, shall be read as if the words 'cause him to be absent throughout at least one whole day from his ordinary work' were substituted for the words 'prevent him on any one of the three working days next after the occurrence of the accident from being employed for five hours on his ordinary work' in Sub-section 1 of that section."

His object in calling attention to this form of drafting was very simple. It was to impress on the Government that they ought, as far as possible, to put a stop to this system of legislation by reference to previous Acts of Parliament. He spoke as a lawyer, and he could state that the members of his profession had sometimes to cudgel their brains to find the meaning of statutes in consequence of Acts being constructed in this way. It was particularly desirable that this form of drafting should be avoided in labour legislation. The Government ought to make their draftsmen put down in fairly plain and simple language what was meant, so that anybody could understand it. It should not be necessary to refer to half a dozen Acts of Parliament before getting the meaning of a particular statute.

MR. CARLILE (Hertfordshire, St. Albans) said it was a matter of congratulation that this measure should have been received so sympathetically in every quarter of the House. He rose to call attention to a remark made by the hon. Member for Bolton in regard to which the House was entitled to rather more information. The hon. Member stated that he knew employers who compelled their employees to return to work for three days following an accident in order to avoid liability under the Workmen's Compensation Act of 1897.

MR. GILL: I did not say in order to prevent liability under the Workmen's Compensation Act. I said in order to prevent the reporting of the accident.

MR. CARLILE said he did not know that the explanation made any material difference as to the importance of the allegation. He thought he was justified in asking the hon. Member to enter more into detail when he made an allegation of that kind. That there were employers of labour who were not considerate to their workmen no one could for a moment doubt, but that any considerable number of such persons could come within the knowledge of the hon. Member was, to his mind, extremely doubtful. The reception given to this measure in a House representative as it was of many large employers of labour showed that employers were not likely to compel persons injured by accidents to attend at their work in order to avoid having to report the suffering condition in which they were. He thought employers were entitled to feel indignant at such a suggestion.

*MR. BELL (Derby) said that the hon. Member who had just sat down happily believed that there was no employer of labour, or no official of an employer, who desired to conceal accidents which occurred to workpeople. Unfortunately he himself knew of a number of cases where officials—he did not say employers—had asked men who had been injured to come to the works and that they would provide substitutes for them to do their work, so as to prevent a report of the accident being sent in.

MR. CARLILE pointed out that the emarks of the hon. Member for Bolton had reference to employers.

*MR. BELL said he was not going to draw any distinction between overseer and employer. The employer was responsible for the overseer. He wanted to make sure in regard to Section 3 that this Bill would be operative in regard to all accidents. He was not at all satisfied that it would apply to a private line or siding worked by a railway company. That was where by misunderstanding, or perhaps shrewdness, some people evaded reporting accidents, and it was one of the important matters he had had to deal with during the past ten years. There was overlapping of the jurisdiction of the Board of Trade and the Home Office, particularly in reference to accidents on private railways and private sidings connected with collieries and other industries. Railway men in order to collect and distribute traffic had to travel over certain portions of these private railways, and some unfortunately met with accidents. The owner of the private railways did not report the accidents because the men injured were not in his employment, and the railway company did not report the accidents because they did not happen on their railway. He wanted the right hon. Gentleman to provide in the Bill, if it was not already included, that all accidents which occurred on private sidings should be duly reported. He heartily supported the Bill, and he hoped that some day they would have a similar measure in regard to all railways.

*MR. GLADSTONE said he could assure his hon. friend that it was the intention of the Government that cases like that to which he had referred would be covered either by previous Acts or by this Bill so as to give his hon. friend the security he desired. His hon. friend the Member for the Hallam Division of Sheffield had asked that the railway companies should report always accidents to one authority. He could not guarantee now that railway companies should always report accidents to one authoirty. Under some Acts they might have to be reported to the Home Office and under others to the Board of Trade.

MR. STUART WORTLEY said he did not want the railways to have to report to two authorities in respect of the same accident.

*MR. GLADSTONE said that was a perfectly legitimate request. The grievance to which his hon. and learned friend the Member for Mid Glamorganshire had drawn attention was felt much more by laymen than by lawyers like his hon. friend himself.

MR. SAMUEL EVANS said he had not been speaking as a lawyer but as a Member of this House.

*MR. GLADSTONE said his hon. and learned friend was speaking with all the admirable qualities he possessed. This, however, was a case of wishing to be saved from the hon. and learned Gentleman and his learned friends. It would help them all if Bills were drawn in plain language which laymen as well as lawyers could understand. But it was a difficult matter to introduce a change and there were always temptations in Government departments not so much to approve of as to acquiesce in forms of drafting which were calculated to facilitate the passage of Bills through the House. He rose in particular to give one or two assurances. The hon. Member for Middlesbrough had spoken of the necessity of giving returns with regard to accidents on board ship. Of course, the Government desired that there should be full information with regard to accidents on ships whether they were at sea or in dock. But he was not sure whether it would be possible in this Bill to do what the hon. Member desired. So far as anything could be done to meet his wishes the matter would be considered. With regard to the period of fourteen days he gave an assurance that there should be an assimilation as regarded this Bill and any subsequent amending Bill which might be brought in.

Lord R. CECIL (Marylebone, E.) said that, before the Bill was disposed of, he wished, as a member of the legal profession, to say a word of dissent to what had been said by the hon. Member for Mid Glamorgan. It was apparent from the speech of the Home Secretary that it was not the lawyers who were responsible for the outrageous complication of modern Acts of Parliament; and this Bill seemed to pass all bounds in the way of legislation by reference. The reason was a Parliamentary and not a legal one—it was to conceal the true meaning of a Bill so as to diminish opposition.

*Mr. MORTON (Sutherland) wished to support the view that all Acts of Parliament referred to should be stated in the Bill itself. It was impossible, not only for laymen, but for lawyers to understand legislation of this kind without referring to a great number of Acts of Parliament. The matter had become a serious one, and in some States in America the difficulty was recognised, and by a clause of the constitution it was enacted that whenever a clause of another Act of Parliament was incorporated it should be fully recited in the Bill. He hoped the present Home Secretary with his great majority behind him would have the courage to deal adequately with this question, and to effect a reform which had been long delayed.

Question put.

Bill read a second time, and committed to the Standing Committee on Trade, etc.

POLICE (SUPERANNUATION) BILL.

Order for Second Reading read.

*Mr. HERBERT SAMUEL, in moving the Second Reading of the Police Superannuation Bill, said that this was another small Departmental Bill which, in its greater part, the present Government had inherited from their predecessors. It was uncontroversial and involved no large question of principle. At present the cost of police superannuation was heavy and was a rapidly increasing burden on public funds. Ten years ago it amounted to £578,000, but in 1904–5 it amounted to over £900,000, of which only £100,000 came from the police. £300,000 came from the Exchequer, £300,000 from the rates, and £200,000 from interest on capital, certain fines, fees, etc. To diminish the scale of pension was not desirable; but police authorities had suggested a method of lightening the burden, and it was now submitted to the House. If constables could be induced to continue their service for a longer period there would be a greater saving. Five men serving for thirty years would do the same work as six men serving for twenty-five years, but the cost of training and pensioning a man would be saved. Besides, some of the most valuable men were now lost to the force in the prime of life. But men who remained in the force after becoming entitled to pension were exposed to the risk of losing their pension from misconduct or negligence; while, after the constable had once left the force, he could only forfeit his pension by committing some one of a small number of grave offences. These were—conviction of a criminal offence and sentence to prison; association with thieves or reputed thieves; refusing to assist police in detecting crime; and carrying on an illegal occupation or occupation in which improper use was made of the man's position as a police officer. Consequently most men preferred to retire on pensions as soon as they were entitled to do so. Again, police authorities were deterred from offering a small additional payment to induce continuation of service because that payment would itself become pensionable, and would, therefore, have the effect of increasing the pension burden. The Bill offered a remedy for both difficulties. Under its provisions a constable might continue in the service after becoming entitled to pension, and his pension would be liable to forfeit only for the same grave offences for which it would have been liable to forfeit had he retired; while the extra pay given for continuing in the force would not necessarily be the basis for a further increase in pension. The police authorities generally were in favour of the measure. Liverpool, Manchester, Leeds, Sheffield, Lancashire, West Riding, Cumberland, Durham, Staffordshire, Kent, Sussex, Monmouthshire, and many more, had passed resolutions in its favour. There was practically no opposition, and in 1904 the Bill was read a second time in this House without a Division and passed through the Grand Committee, but then no further progress was made with it and it was dropped. To that Bill the Government now proposed to make some additions. Clause 2 dealt with a problem that had recently arisen with regard to the question of discontinuous service. An action tried in the Court of King's Bench in December, 1903, resulted in a declaration that, as the law stood, a constable who retired from the police force for whatever reason and who rejoined later was not entitled to have his first period of service counted as part of his service for the pension to which he was entitled. That pressed very hardly on the constable in some cases. In one case a constable in Lincolnshire served for seven years in the police force and then resigned, he believed, on account of ill-health. After four months he recovered and rejoined the force and served for a period of twenty-five years altogether when he retired on a pension of £45. As soon as the case to which he had referred was decided and it was held that a break in the service forfeited on the part of the constable all benefit with regard to his first period of service, the Lincolnshire police authority had no alternative but to wipe off seven years of the service of this constable, and as a result the pension was reduced from £45 to £27. That was exceedingly hard. The Lord Chief Justice who tried the case previously mentioned, expressed the opinion that this was an imperfection in the law and that an amendment of the Act was urgently desirable. Clause 3 dealt with another point. When the Boer War broke out a number of policemen who were also Army reservists were called out and had to go to South Africa, and it was found necessary to pass in 1902 a special Act to secure that their rights to their pensions were not prejudiced by their going to fight in South Africa. That Act only applied to the men who were called out at that time, and it was now proposed to make that rule permanent, so that if any such case arose in the future it would not be necessary for Parliament to have recourse to special legislation. Clause 4 added three further clauses to those he had already mentioned which would result in the forfeiture of his pension by a police constable. If a constable, after leaving the force, was sentenced to imprisonment or consorted with thieves or refused to give assistance to the police in detecting crime, and so forth, he forfeited his pension. It was proposed to add to that that if he published in a discreditable manner confidential information which he had obtained while in the service he should forfeit his pension. Very great temptation was often put in the way of a constable who had left the service to disclose, for an improper purpose, information which he had obtained while in the service, and it was considered most necessary to impose some penalty on those police constables who published such confidential information. A most evil practice also occasionally existed of police officers who retired from the force receiving testimonials of large pecuniary value from publicans and others in the district of which they had had the supervision, and that practice had gone so far in London that in some cases ex-police superintendents or inspectors had been known to canvass and solicit pecuniary testimonials in the district of which they had charge. In one or two cases the Commissioner of Police had protested against this practice, but as the police constable had retired he had no power to stop such a regrettable occurrence and his protests had been ignored. The Bill provided that where such a practice occurred the police authority might thereupon enforce the forfeiture of the pension of the constable concerned. The third and last addition was in the case of a constable who engaged in or continued to be engaged in a private detective agency after being prohibited from doing so on reasonable grounds. It was not proposed to prohibit altogether a police officer becoming a private detective, but it was desired, where it was known that the private detective agency was conducted in a discreditable manner, to give the police authority power to interfere and enforce the retirement of the ex-police officer from such agency. Those were the purposes of the Bill. He was sure the police force of this country had the goodwill of this House. The men were often subjected to hardship and were sometimes exposed to great danger, and any measure which would in some degree relieve the disabilities from which they suffered and raise the *status* of the force, and which at the same time would achieve some measure of economy, would, he was sure,meet with the favour of Parliament. He begged to move that the Bill be read a second time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Sir HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central) said that as one who had been for some time connected with the force, he was glad the Government had seen their way to adopt the Bill which had been contemplated by the late Government to amend the Police Act. He congratulated the Under-Secretary of State for the Home Department upon the admirably clear and concise speech in which he had laid the provisions of the Bill before the House. He believed it was a Bill that would give great satisfaction and advance the position of this branch of the public service. On the first clause there was nothing to add to the observations of the Under-Secretary, although it must be admitted that a man who had not been promoted to a superior rank was not fit for much after twenty-five years service in the streets. Therefore, the services of a very valuable officer were lost to the public for three, four, or five years. At the same time it was necessary, of course, to safeguard the interests of the force, and to prevent men who were not in a physical condition of health from discharging their duties, and possibly to continue their services to the prejudice of others whose promotion might be stopped. But he thought by Sub-section 2 of Clause 1, and by the annual medical examination which would be required of every officer serving beyond the period at which he could obtain his pension, sufficient protection was given in that direction. As regarded the second clause, owing to the great exposure to which the police had to submit, a member of the force might find his health give way and a few months or a year's rest might help him to regain it and he would be able to rejoin the force, and instead of having an untrained recruit, the services were retained of a very valuable member. He was sure the police authorities would be gratified at the embodiment in a permanent Act of the provisions to meet the case of those police who were in the Army Reserve. Nor had he any criticism of an adverse character to make as regarded Section 4. There had undoubtedly been occasional instances in which police officers employed upon very special and confidential work might have pecuniary inducements held out to them to publish their reminiscences, details of which were of a strictly confidential character, and which could not possibly advance the public interest. This difficulty had had to be dealt with in other countries. Several of the heads of the detective service in France had published their reminiscences and disclosed many facts which ought to have been kept perfectly confidential, and the tendency had crept into this country. It was a very desirable thing to safeguard the interests of the public in this matter, and he did not think any objection would be taken by any police officer to the incorporation of these conditions. As regarded the sub-section as to engaging in private inquiry work, that was also a matter which would have to be very carefully regulated. He was sure there was no police authority, and least of all the Police Commissioner of the Metropolis, who wished to interfere with a man augmenting, in an honest way his pension, which was often a modest amount, but cases had occurred in which judges had commented very adversely upon private inquiry agencies, and it was not desirable that pensioners from the Metropolitan or other police forces should be engaged in these occupations if they were of an unsatisfactory character. He thanked the Government for having so quickly adopted the views of the late Home Secretary and brought this Bill forward.

*Mr. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.) said he did not desire to oppose the Second Reading of this Bill, but he certainly did not think that opinion in favour of its principal provision was quite so unanimous as had been represented. The object, and no doubt the effect, of that provision would be to encourage constables who had already served the statutory period to enter into arrangements to continue in the service, and he was not at all sure that it was a satisfactory thing to encourage arrangements of that sort. Parliament had prescribed twenty-five years as a period of service after which a constable might claim his pension, and if they kept the old constables in the force one effect would be to check what perhaps he might call a proper flow of promotion, and secondly, as regarded the outside world, it must not be forgotten, especially in the present state of the labour market, that every constable who remained in the police service after the expiry of the statutory period was keeping another man out of a job. He liked Section 2 so far as it went, but it did not go far enough. It was worthy of consideration whether it should not be made compulsory. Section 4 of the Bill added to the cases in which a pension might be forfeited, and when the Under-Secretary referred to its provisions there were some cheers, but he thought those cheers were due to the fact that the hon. Gentleman had not quoted accurately the form of words. He told the House that the pension would be forfeited if the constable published confidential information in a discreditable manner. If the clause ran in that way he would not raise any objection to it. But the clause ran as follows—

> "If the grantee publishes in a manner which the police authority consider to be discreditable or improper any information of a confidential nature which he may have obtained in the course of his employment in the police"

his pension would be forfeited. That clearly made the police authority judges in their own court. There was an appeal from the police authority to the quarter sessions, but the latter could do nothing. He suggested that the words in the Secrets Act, 1889, should be adopted, namely—

> "Wilfully publishes when in the interests of the police it should not be published."

If words like these were substituted there would be no valid objection to the clause. Great difficulty was caused owing to the fact that there was no definition in the Police Act of the word "pay." Police authorities instead of increasing a constable's pay sometimes gave him what they called an allowance for special duty. The only object of not calling it pay was to prevent its being rated for pension. In some cases a constable when he retired was practically defrauded of the proper amount of his pension. In other cases, where the constable had served under the police authorities the police authority which adopted this expedient was able to throw an unfair proportion of the pension on to the other authority. He hoped the Government would consider the possibility of putting into the Bill a definition of the word "pay."

*Mr. CAVE (Surrey, Kingston) said that he agreed with the principle of Clause 1. The experience in his county was that as soon as a constable got his full pension he retired from the force, with the result that they lost some of their best men far too soon. They very much regretted this, because many of those constables were able to do a good many more years work, and they were anxious to be able to keep them in the force. But the clause required to be amended. The Bill provided that the police authority might direct, that when a constable entitled to retire on a pension continued to serve in the force, such constable should be entitled on retiring at any time thereafter to receive a full pension, and that such pension should not be liable to forfeiture except in certain events involving grave misconduct. In his opinion the result of that would be to put the old officers in a privileged position. The police force was a quasi-military force, and they all desired that discipline should be maintained, but there was some danger in placing a particular section of the police force in a different position to the rest of the force. A direction ought to be inserted limiting this privilege say to one year, and it might be renewed from year to year; and then, if there was any breach of discipline so serious that the police authority did not think it advisable to continue this privileged position, they might without any trouble put an end to it by refusing to renew the privilege, and the constable would then leave the force with his pension. That, he thought, would be an improvement and he hoped it would be considered He trusted that the Bill would be read a second time.

Mr. W. H. DAVIES (Bristol, S.) said he quite approved of the proposals of the Bill. The subject dealt with was causing considerable anxiety among municipalities on account of the increased cost of the pension fund. He assumed it was the intention of the Government in introducing this Bill to secure the efficiency of the police force as well as economy. He feared that the clause of the measure which proposed to allow policemen to remain in the force for a longer period than twenty-five years would, unless there was some advantage to be gained, only result in their not remaining. In the city he represented many of their able and capable retired policemen were able to secure profitable positions at higher salaries and with larger pensions than they would receive if they had remained in the police force. Unless this clause was considered more generously they would not be able to retain those men in the police force.

Mr. WILLIAM RUTHERFORD said he was entirely against the principle of this Bill. The effect of Clause 1 would be that when constables had finished their statutory period of service which entitled them to retire on a pension the authority would have power to take them on again in the force in a new category, under which their additional service would not count for pension, and they would receive a small amount of money in addition to the pension that they otherwise would have got. The constable who had obtained the right by his service to retire and receive a pension would be retained in the force by the local authority and would receive wages instead of pension which would amount to a little more than the pension. This scheme had been tried in Liverpool for two years, and it had been found to be a failure. He could understand that it was very desirable to keep the men from retiring, but even a police constable's legs had only a limited life.

And, it being half-past Seven of the clock, the debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed to-morrow.

EVENING SITTING.

PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS.
RETURNING OFFICERS CHARGES.

*Mr. ROWLANDS (Kent, Dartford) said it was his privilege to submit to the House a Resolution which he had submitted to it and which he was successful in carrying twelve years ago. Since he last had the honour of speaking in this House many changes had taken place, but no change had taken place in regard to the subject matter of his Resolution. The Resolution which he now proposed was one that raised a very clear issue indeed, namely, the conditions under which hon. and right hon. Gentleman came into this House. He wished to know why a candidate for Parliamentary honours should be put in a worse position than a candidate for any other public office in this country. There were a number of positions of honour and importance in this country, and for every one of those positions the candidate who submitted himself to the electorate was held free from any charge whatsoever for the cost of the machinery necessary for the election. He might be told that that was only one portion of the question, but he contended that what a candidate chose to spend himself within the limits of the Corrupt Practices Act was his own affair. In this case the candidate was penalised by having to pay the expense of taking the votes. He wanted to know why, of all the candidates who submitted themselves to the electorates of this country for election to positions of honour, the candidate for Parliament alone should have to bear the whole of the official expenses of the election. His Resolution contained two distinct propositions; the first half was—

> "To call attention to the official charges of returning officers at Parliamentary elections, and to move that in the opinion of this House the returning officers expenses and all other official charges in connection with Parliamentary elections should be defrayed out of public funds;"

and the second half dealt with the scale of charges contained in the Act governing the elections, the Parliamentary Elections (Returning Officers) Expenses Act, 1875. What he desired to get from this new Parliament was the opinion of the House upon the question of whether or not a candidate ought to be relieved from these charges. The question of whether the Consolidated Fund or the rates was eventually to bear the expense could not be settled by any abstract Resolution of this description. Should the Resolution, however, be carried and the Government of the day think proper to bring in a Bill to relieve the candidate of these expenses, it would be for the Minister in charge of the Bill to say whether the expense was to be borne by the Consolidated Fund or the rates, and it would then be in the power of the House to say on which fund the expenditure should be charged. When this question was before the House in 1894 three very important speeches were made in support of the Resolution by three eminent gentlemen who at that time held very different political opinions and represented different sections of the House. Sir Henry James, now Lord James of Hereford, said—

> "His hon. friend spoke of putting the charge upon the Consolidated Fund, but he protested against that. If the burden were to be removed it ought to be cast upon the locality."

The present Secretary of State for India (Mr. John Morley), who spoke on behalf of the Government of the day, took the same view as Lord James of Hereford. He said—

> "The question is upon what public funds the charges should be cast; and the view of the Government is that they should be cast upon the locality."

The third speech was made by one who at that time adorned this House, Lord Randolph Churchill, who said—

> "It was the greatest object the State could achieve to get a complete representation of all classes in Parliament, whether they were labour representatives, representatives of the middle classes, representatives of literature, or science, or art, or law, or even of the landed interest; and therefore it was right that to achieve that end there should be a contribution from the Consolidated Fund."

Notwithstanding the strong difference of opinion among those right hon. Gentlemen as to the fund which should bear the burden, all three supported the Resolution, and the position they then took up justified him in trying to get a clear issue before the House—an issue the terms of which would not prevent any hon. Member voting for the Resolution because he might differ as to the particular fund that was to bear the burden. After all, tht burden was not very heavy, whichever fund had to bear it, as was proved by the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for India, who, in 1894, calculated that if these charges came out of the rates the extra rate necessitated would be half a farthing if the election took place every four years, or one-eighth of a farthing annually. The present amount that had to be paid by candidates to returning officers was, he believed, entirely unjustifiable and illegal. The history of this question was very simple. These charges grew up under the old system when very little machinery was necessary. The first time that any real machinery came into existence was with the passing of the Ballot Act of 1872. It was then necessary to have complete machinery for the gathering in of the votes of the community. At that time there was no limit to the charges of the returning officer. Those were the halcyon days of those gentlemen, but that state of things was found to be so detrimental, that in 1875 Lord James of Hereford and Sir William Harcourt took the matter up and piloted through the House of Commons the Act of that year. It might seem to hon. Members in these days that the task of getting the Act of 1875 through the House was not a heavy one, but he remembered that Lord James of Hereford in 1894 made use of some very strong expressions as to his experience of forcing that Act through the House. The noble Lord, then Sir Henry James, said—

> "In those old days very heavy charges were made against a candidate as the right of the

returning officer to make such charges was almost unlimited. No matter how preposterous the charges might be, the candidate was always advised to pay them, as otherwise he would make himself extremely unpopular in the constituency. He recollected well that in 1875 there was a strong feeling in the House in favour of these over charges. Members who supported the Bill were subjected even to personal abuse and it was charged against them that they were men of narrow spirit who were trying to deprive the returning officers of their vested interests in elections."

They had gone a long way since then, and he hoped they would go still further and get rid entirely of these so-called vested interests which penalised not only representatives of the working-classes, but men of intellect and small means whose ability would be of great service both to this House and to the nation. It might be said that if this anomaly were done away with it would detract from the dignity of the candidate. But they had elections to the county councils and other public bodies at which Peers of the Realm stood and had their expenses paid, without its in the least detracting from their dignity. A few years ago there was an election in Stepney for the county council. The hon. Member for Central Finsbury was one candidate, and the Hon. Member for Stepney was his opponent. The election took place and the official expenses were paid. A week afterwards both hon. Members were fighting a Parliamentary election in respect to which they had to pay the whole of these expenses. What he desired those who opposed this Motion to do was to point out what metamorphosis had taken place which necessitated that while a man fighting a county council election had his expenses paid the same man when putting up for this House had to pay them himself. He himself was asked to put down on his nomination paper no less than £450. It was there! The amount that he and the right hon. Gentleman he was fighting had to put down on that Saturday morning was £900, and they had to find it in order that 20,000 citizens might have the opportunity of using their right of citizenship to go to the polling booth and register their vote, and to express their opinions upon the great Imperial and national questions before the country. He wanted that justified if it could be. The community had accepted a representative system, and, that being so, it was only fair that they should bear the cost. He had heard a good deal about the burden not being heavy upon the candidates, and he would, with the permission of the House, just give the grand totals of the cost of the elections since 1895. The total cost of the election in 1885 was £235,906; in 1886 it was £138,937; in 1892 £197,542; in 1895 £156,741; and in 1900, £150,278. With regard to the election of 1906 the figures were not yet available, but he had struck an average for that of £200,000, which he thought was well within the mark. Since 1885 the candidates had paid £1,080,406 as their share of the cost of setting up the machinery for the Parliamentary elections. To show how it affected individual cases he had taken the trouble to extract from the Parliamentary Returns the cost to four Gentlemen who sat in the House through five general elections—the hon. Member for the Wansbeck Division of Northumberland, the hon. Member for Mid. Durham, the hon. Member for Rhondda Valley, and the late Mr. Pickard. He found that the total official expenses for the five elections of those Gentlemen was £4,114 4s. 2d., while the other expenses amounted to £6,826 17s.5d. and that the official expenses were 38 per cent. of the entire sum which these Gentlemen had to find for the elections. That was a very heavy penalty indeed for anyone to pay for coming into this House, and it was one which the House would be glad to see removed. It might be said that if they attempted to deal with these charges they would find one or two difficulties in their way. What, for instance, were they to do with bogus candidates? In that regard he had always expressed himself as being in favour of a Second Ballot. But it might be said that that would not entirely kill the bogus candidate; if it did not they would not object to a legitimate penalty in the shape of a sum to be paid down in the first instance, to be forfeited by the candidate if he did not poll a fair percentage of votes. The position was this—these charges were either justifiable or unjustifiable. If they were justifiable why was there a differentiation between the position of a candidate for this House and the position of a candidate for a county council?. He thought they were entirely unjustifiable, that they were the last ditch of the property qualification for entry to this House. Hon. Members knew the kind of argument used in times gone by as to what would happen to the House if they extended the suffrage. They knew what was urged against their friends when they were trying to get rid of the old property qualification in 1858. Then they had some outspoken criticisms, but they were honest. Mr. Drummond said—

> "Suppose they had no qualification, suppose they were all paupers, what would they get by that? If they divorced property from political power it would be impossible to preserve the framework of society. They had heard some little hints as to what those Gentlemen who really desired reform meant to do when they got it. It was to throw the whole burden of taxation upon that Uptopian society called the 'rich,' and then they would soon have the happiness of being reduced to an uniform level of pauperism."

All he could say was that the abolition of the property qualification in 1858 had operated very slowly in throwing the burden upon the "Utopian society," and that we were not yet reduced to the uniform level of pauperism. Another speech from which he would quote was that of Mr. Bentinck, who said—

> "He opposed it on principle because he believed that a property qualification was an essential ingredient in the constitution of that House."

> "It was urged that such proceedings would open the door to bankrupts, spendthrifts, and paupers—and he had heard nothing to invalidate that argument."

It was true that from time to time undesirables did find their way into this House, but an exclusive franchise or the property qualification, the payment of official expenses would not have kept them out. Those were persons who came here for the deliberate purpose of using their position in this House for their own ends, and not for the dignity conferred upon those who were sent here as representatives of the people. That was the argument in favour of the first part of the Resolution.

The second part dealt with the material reduction of the expenditure for Parliamentary elections. He wanted it to be known as widely as possible, and he believed a debate in this House immediately after a general election, when Members were face to face with the returning officers' expenses, would have a good effect, that the accounts of returning officers were, according to the law, to be taxed. The returning officer under the law as it at present existed could not make a profit out of his services. Under the Act of 1875 he was allowed to charge his own fees, but so far as the other expenses he was put to were concerned he was the trustee of the candidate and must conduct his business as a trustee in the best possible manner, and give a voucher for every penny of expenditure. When Lord James of Hereford and Sir William Harcourt performed the great work of getting the Act of 1875 through the House they inserted a scale of charges which was to be the maximum. That, as he understood, meant that the scale was not to be exceeded, but that had now been construed by the returning officers to mean the normal charge. Some of those gentlemen had had a terrible awakening and others would have a terrible awakening later. Some returning officers charged 5s. each for the hire of ballot boxes, and that was a very lucrative thing. He had before him the advertisement of a firm of law stationers in which boxes were offered at 8s. 6d., 10s. 6d., and the best quality at 16s. 6d. These boxes could be turned into deed boxes until they were wanted again. When these charges were fixed by Lord James he had no idea that they were to be used in this way. As to the question of mileage he remembered Admiral Field stated that he knew a case where 1s. a mile was charged for twenty-four miles by railway, though the distance was only nine miles by road. Ballot papers were charged at the rate of 30s. per thousand. His hon. friends opposite would wish that the workmen should get a fair proportion of the 30s. They did not want the workmen concerned in producing ballot papers to be sweated, but they protested against the sweating of candidates by returning officers. Something had been done to amend the law in relation to election expenses in the case of county council elections. The Local Government Act of 1888 gave county councils power to draw up a new scale. He had taken the trouble to get together several of the amended scales which had been adopted by county councils throughout the country. These new scales showed a very marked difference in the charges. The London County Council, which was very generous, allowed a sum not exceeding 17s. 6d. per thousand for ballot papers; and they allowed presiding officers two guineas a day instead of the four guineas allowed in counties at present. He wanted to tell the House how this affected a candidate. He knew of a case where there was a dispute in regard to the expenses of the returning officer. The returning officer asked how much was wanted back. The reply was that £100 was wanted, and that amount came back. Lord James, speaking in 1894, said he thought it possible that the whole scale then in existence might be reduced by at least one-third. If that reduction could be made it would be of great advantage to candidates, and to the community in case they had to pay. He did not believe it would be possible for returning officers to make the charges they did if their accounts had to undergo an audit by a public body. In his opinion, all this expenditure was not at all necessary. The reform he suggested—and it could easily be effected under the Ballot Act—was that there should be in the hands of one of the local authorities a complete set of election machinery which could be loaned at a fixed sum to other authorities as they required to use it. In that way the whole of the expenditure now incurred could be swept away.

He was waiting to see the amount of the charge in the recent election for the City of London. There had been no case there since 1892 where the charges could be compared as between a Parliamentary and a county council election. In that year, when there were both, he found that the County Council election cost £364 9s. 6d., while the Parliamentary election cost £732 19s. In 1895 a county council election in Camberwell cost £169 6s. 6d. and a Parliamentary election cost £273 8s.; in Dulwich a county council election cost £183 14s. and a Parliamentary election cost £333 3s. He could give many other instances of the same kind where the areas and the polling places were identical. He sincerely hoped that the Government would now follow the precedent of 1894. At that time a similar Motion was submitted to the House, but political events prevented the Government from carrying it to a practical result. He sincerely hoped that the Government would not only accept the Resolution, but would embody it in an Act and place it on the Statute book.

*Mr. FENWICK (Northumberland, Wansbeck) congratulated the hon. Member for the Dartford division on his return to the House, and on the ability and clearness with which he had presented the Resolution. Whatever might be thought of the broader question of the payment of Members, there could be no difference of opinion as to the claim that such official expenses as were incurred in the interests of the general public and in compliance with statutory regulations should be paid from public sources. Under the present system every general election seemed to be regarded as a fitting opportunity for fleecing the various gentlemen who submitted themselves for election to serve the public interest in Parliament. These expenses had always seemed to him unjust and excessive, and yet they had a tendency to grow from election to election. That, no doubt, was partly the consequence of the growth of the population and the addition that was made every year to the electorate in the various constituencies. He contended that these expenses ought not to be borne by the individual candidates, but by the community at large. When he was first elected the official charges amounted to £542, distributed, of course, between his opponent and himself. Twenty years had intervened since then, and at the election just over the expenses amounted to £783. He had gone through six contested elections in these twenty years, and on each occasion a charge had been made for the use of ballot boxes and stamping apparatus. The House knew well that he did not personally pay the election expenses, but his friends who supported his views had had to pay them, and long ere now they had acquired a vested interest in the ballot boxes and stamping apparatus, and yet he found that at the last election a sum of £30 was put down for the use of them. He pointed out the inequality of sacrifice in the case of a candidate in a county as compared with a candidate in a borough. Of course, they might be told that the borough area was more compact and necessarily less expensive to work than the county, but that was small comfort to the candidate when he had been mulcted in official expenses to the tune of £150 or £200 more than his neighbour just over the imaginary line which divided the county and the borough constituencies. At the election of 1900, in the Wansbeck Division with an electorate of 14,179, the official expenses were £685, while in the East Bradford Division with an electorate of 14,189, the expenses were only £286. At the same election in Battersea, with an electorate of 14,420, the official expenses were only £334. These inequalities ought not to be tolerated by this House or the country. There were nine representatives of universities in the House, and their official costs in contested elections were practically *nil.* In 1886 his hon. and learned friend the Member for North Louth introduced a Bill the object of which was to reduce the official charges in Ireland. That Bill passed through all its stages in this House. In Committee an Amendment was carried which abolished the whole of the official expenses so far as the representation of Ireland was concerned. That Bill went to another place, and as the gentlemen there were not accustomed to submit themselves to constituencies for election that Amendment was struck out. He was sorry to say that before this House had time to consider the Lords' Amendment Parliament was dissolved, and they were face to face with another election. He thought his hon. friend who moved the Resolution was pretty accurate in estimating that the cost would be about £200,000 if these expenses were thrown on the Consolidated Fund or the local rates. General elections took place on the average every four or five years, and, that being so, he did not think that was an enormous sum to throw on the Consolidated Fund or the local rates. Those who objected to the cheapening of elections often said that the abolition of official charges would lead to unnecessary and factious contests. But even under the present arrangement they did not get rid of such contests. In the six contested elections he had gone through his average majority in the first four was 3,160. At the khaki election in 1900 it fell to 1,191, because of the vigorous stand he made in opposing what he considered to be an unrighteous war. At the recent election it rose to 7,176, and no doubt if he lived he would have another contest at the next election. He sincerely hoped that the Government would accept the Resolution.

Motion proposed, "That in the opinion of this House, the returning officers' expenses, and all other official charges in connection with Parliamentary elections, should be defrayed out of public funds, and that a material reduction is possible in the present scale of charges allowed under the Parliamentary Elections (Returning Officers) Expenses Act, 1875."—(*Mr. Rowlands.*)

MR. WILLIAM RUTHERFORD said the Motion before the House seemed to divide itself into two parts. The first part was a declaration that the expenses which were charged against candidates by returning officers should be cast upon the public funds, and the other, which seemed to him to be an entirely different subject, was a declaration that the amount of these charges was excessive. He entirely agreed with the proposer of the Motion with regard to the first part, but entirely differed from him with regard to the second. Personally he had had the advantage of having served in practically every capacity that was possible at an election. He had been canvasser, poll clerk, presiding officer, returning officer, and candidate. Therefore, he had had the advantage of making these charges and paying them. He hoped he had earned them by doing the work properly, because none of the elections in which he was concerned had in any way gone wrong. The House ought to be grateful to the proposer of the Motion for pointing out the difference of practice in the matter of official expenses at municipal and Parliamentary elections. He could assure the hon. Member that in a good many cases the charges made by returning officers were not excessive and that the amounts were earned by the work done. Four-fifths of any returning officer's charges were in the nature of payments which had to be vouched and were subject to taxation. Therefore it was absurd to suggest that returning officers, who had been held up to a little contumely and upon whom a little reflection had been cast, were bloated plutocrats, drawing improper remuneration out of the pockets of Members of this House. He was convinced that the charges ought not to fall on the candidates. They ought to be paid by the counties and the boroughs. In the case of municipal elections these expenses were paid by the boroughs. If that was a right thing to do in the case of municipal elections, the same practice ought to be introduced with respect to Parliamentary elections. His experience in municipal elections had shown him that the absence of any deposit or penalty had a tendency to create bogus candidates—men got nominated for the express purpose of advertising themselves. He understood the proposer of the Motion to suggest that a small deposit should be exacted from each candidate, and that it should be returned if a certain reasonable proportion of the electorate voted for the candidate. There was no doubt that the House of Commons to-day was more democratic than it ever was in days gone by. It was not only more democratic in membership, but also, he believed, in its ideas and instincts, and regard should be had to these ideas and instincts. Then, further, in all countries which had legislative assemblies those charges were paid by the State. He was not one of those who habitually contended that because other countries adopted some practice this country should do the same. He thought that argument was absurd; but there was this to be said for it, that we were not the sole depositories of wisdom, and when we saw other countries almost universally adopting a particular practice it afforded a reason for examining into the subject. The next reason was that the fact of candidates having to pay those charges, which were sometimes very excessive, tended to make membership of this House the exclusive privilege of the rich. He was one of these who thought that to-day the rich had not the exclusive privilege of education, intelligence, common-sense, ability, or devotion to the general interests of the community; and therefore any barrier which tended to keep the membership of the House to the rich ought to be swept away. There should be no distinction between Members who represented the scattered constituencies, where the charges were very high, and Members for boroughs where the charges were comparatively moderate. He had much pleasure in supporting the Motion.

Mr. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.) said that this was one of many matters in which this House might follow the example set by some of the colonies. He had recently been throughout the length and breadth of Australia, and had found after inquiry that the public expenses at all election contests were borne by the State, and with the very best results. In some of the Australian States candidates were required to make a certain deposit to show that their candidature was *bona fide*, and this deposit was returned if the candidate polled a reasonable number of votes. Bogus candidates were few in the Australian States; the elections were conducted in a proper way, and the result had been most satisfactory. He had listened with interest to the hon. Gentleman who seconded the Resolution when he gave the House figures showing how the number of electors in his constituency had continually increased. He regretted to say that he had an exactly opposite experience, as had also some other Irish Members. When first elected to the House the constituency he represented contained some thousands more electors than now, and therefore he had not to complain that the public expenses of an election had increased. They had decreased, but that did not in the slightest degree do away with the hardship and injustice which the present arrangement inflicted on poor men. It enabled a candidate who possessed a great deal of money, and absolutely nothing else to talk about, to give a great deal of trouble and annoyance to another candidate who had every other qualification in the world except money. By way of illustrating how the thing worked he would state the case of his own constituency in the county of Clare. In 1885, in a constituency of 12,000, the opponents of Home Rule were in a small and insignificant minority. The policy of those who opposed the Nationalist Party was, if they could not succeed in defeating the Nationalist candidate, to do the next best thing. They ran a candidate simply to deplete as far as they could the treasury of their political opponents by compelling them to spend large sums of money. Both divisions of Clare were contested, and the Conservatives did not succeed in polling more than one vote for every pound they had paid the returning officer. At the next election, in 1886, the same course was pursued by the Conservative party, although they knew that they could not poll more than 300 or 400 votes, and the man who could command a majority of 6,000 votes was obliged to pay £300 for returning officer's expenses. On the day of the election the candidates opposed to the Nationalist Party jeered and boasted, "We know we cannot win, but we will make these poor Home Rule candidates pay out their money, and they will get tired of that." That was a state of affairs which could not be permitted to continue. So far as they in Ireland were concerned they had the utmost sympathy with the suggestion of the hon. Gentleman who had moved this Resolution, and if it was necessary to do so they would support him on a division. However, he hardly thought that anyone at this time of day would oppose a suggestion so obviously fair and wise. He had been somewhat astonished to hear the free and democratic expression of opinion from the representative of a Lancashire constituency on the Opposition benches, and he hoped that when a certain exalted personage who wanted to copy other countries in other things returned to the House he would not change his opinion. He was certain that this measure would be supported by every Member who wished to see fair play, and that no man should be excluded from the House for want of money.

*MR. STUART (Sunderland) said it seemed that there was not to be any opposition to the Resolution from the Conservative side of the House, and he believed that in this Parliament many other measures would be passed which met with opposition from the Conservative Party on former occasions. He trusted that the House would not stop at passing the Resolution, but insist on its being embodied into law by the present Parliament, and on the Government taking up the question. One or two points had been raised as possible difficulties in the way of the payment of the returning officer's expenses. One was that it would induce bogus candidates to come forward, but he believed that that was a bogus difficulty. He had had experience of six general elections for the London County Council, and many bye-elections which had been conducted with the vigour and the energy of Parliamentay elections, and he was not able to recall any instance of a canditature which was not justified by the results. Therefore he was not afraid of bogus candidates, and he welcomed a proposition which would open a door to every citizen to enter Parliament.

MR. CLAUDE HAY said that what he and others on the Conservative side of the House had felt somewhat keenly in their experience was that in their candidature they were confronted with an expenditure of hidden wealth by the Party opposite. This matter of election officers' expenses did not apply alone to Parliamentary elections. An increasing burden was thrown year by year on those who took an active part in municipal elections. There was a growing opinion that the expense involved in county council and borough elections had become so great that it should be borne by the public at large rather than by the candidates. It was idle to think that this was a Party question. His hon. friend near him had shewn that this was a matter which had developed as education had developed, and that there was now a keener interest taken in all elections than was formerly the case. His own opinion was that the cost of the elections should not be thrown on the candidates or on the local authorities, but that the burden should be put upon the people as a whole.

Mr. AKERS-DOUGLAS (Kent, St. Augustine's) said that he had considerable experience in electioneering matters, and he would like to express his view to the House. The debate had been marked by great unanimity, and he did not propose to utter a discordant note. The hon. Gentleman who had moved the resolution had chosen a most appropriate time for doing so, because hon. Members had had recent experience of the payment of election expenses, and were therefore in a frame of mind to listen with a favourable ear to the eloquent appeal which had been made to them. The hon. Member had pointed out that he desired a clear issue on this matter, and had therefore put down his Motion in a form of words not associated with any other question. The hon. Member was wise, for there were Gentlemen who sympathised with him in his Motion, but who would not have given that sympathy if it had been associated with the subject of payment of Members. Then the hon. Member in drafting his Resolution stated that the charges were to be cast on public funds; he did not ask the House to say that they were to be cast on the rates. He himself was in favour of a Motion of this character, but he could not support it if it was proposed to cast returning officers' charges on the rates. He was one of those who thought that the rates already imposed an intolerable burden on the ratepayers, and therefore he contended that the burden of these charges should fall on the Imperial taxes, more especially as the candidates sought to be elected to the Imperial Parliament. The hon. Member for the Wansbeck Division had used somewhat harsh language in regard to the returning officers, and talked about candidates being fleeced. He himself had had a more happy experience than some hon. Members seemed to have had, for although he represented a county with 16,000 electors he had no grievance against his returning officer for the charges he had made. He thought that too much had been made of the cry in regard to bogus candidates. He did not think any large number would be forthcoming; but if the House came to the conclusion that those charges should be placed on Imperial funds, it might be necessary to ask the candidates to put down a substantial sum in the way of caution money which might be forfeited if it was found that the candidature was a frivolous one. That would meet the objection which many Members held and prevent candidates coming forward for the mere purpose of advertisement. As to the second part of the Motion, he thought that some reduction in the charges could easily be made. Though he was not sure that it would be possible or desirable to reduce in a large degree the fee of the returning officer there was no doubt that some of the other charges were excessive. For instance, there was the outrageous charge of seven guineas for fitting up a polling booth, and a charge for hiring ballot boxes. There were also other charges which might have been reasonable at the time the Act was passed, but which were now shewn to be excessive. The returning officer himself had very anxious and responsible duties to perform. He was responsible for the expenses of both the candidates, if the election was found to be invalid. A returning officer was recently mulcted in the sum of £4,000 because the printers employed failed to deliver the ballot papers in time for the opening of the poll. This showed that there must be a responsible man chosen as returning officer and that it was reasonable that he should have a fair and reasonable fee. But there were many charges which ought to be reduced. The local elections to which we had become accustomed since the Act of 1875 were carried on for lower fees. These included elections for parish council, district councils, and county councils, He should like to see more machinery for voting, in the shape of polling stations, placed at the disposal of the electors than was afforded at the present moment. If the electors were given the privilege of voting, they ought to be enabled to exercise it without travelling long distances. This subject might be said not to be cognate to the discussion on the Resolution, but he thought it was, because if they reduced official expenses of elections—and now a competent presiding officer could be obtained for much less than four guineas—there would be less objection to an extension of the number of polling stations which was much desired. He would conclude by expressing his opinion in favour of the Resolution, though he could not support it if an extra charge was placed on the rates.

*THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Sir JOHN WALTON, Leeds, S.) said he was sure they had all listened to the right hon. Gentleman with pleasure, because they were anxious to have some authoritative statement from the Opposition on a subject upon which the House appeared to be unanimous. A caustic historian had said that the House of Commons was never so absolutely wrong as when it was absolutely unanimous. They might, he thought, retort that it was never so absolutely right as when it was unanimous. They might regard without suspicion the unanimity which had characterised this debate. The difficulty of dealing with the Motion arose from the fact that it was almost impossible to discover any argument against it. Allusion had been made to the desirability of demanding some money qualification from the candidates for membership of the House. That system would not even have the advantage of the old property qualification, which guarded in some measure access to this House, as it demanded that the candidates should be possessed of land or heritable property. The theory was that then the candidate possessed a stake in the country and that in the Member who possessed a stake in the country they had a patriot. But the requirement that candidates should find a certain sum of money did not ensure their having what was called a stake in the country, because their money might be derived from some other country. There seemed to be a tendency in these matters to revert to old constitutional methods. The Motion had some historic interest, because in olden days a constituency, in order to obey the writ issued to it, had not only to secure the return of a Member, but to bear the cost of his maintenance while he discharged his duty to his constituents. In later times candidates became volunteers and offered inducements to constituencies to elect them. Now there was a tendency to return to the earlier idea that the duty of the constituency was to provide for its own representation, and that the cost incident to that provision should fall upon the area which sought representation, and, in obedience to the writ, provided it. A good deal had been said as to the amount of the expenses cast upon candidates under the existing law. It was not unimportant to observe that the schedule which determined the amount of the expenses was now entirely out of date. In 1872 the Ballot Act was an experiment, and it was thought that the machinery in connection with the Act could only be worked with very high-class professional assistance. Now the services of competent officials might undoubtedly be obtained at a very much lower rate of remuneration. Even, therefore, if the question whether any expenses should be cast upon the candidate were not dealt with, there would be a strong case for entirely altering the schedule. But if the burden were cast upon the constituencies, he thought the constituencies would take care that unnecessary expenditure was not incurred. He would suggest to the House that the true way of approaching the Motion was to approach it constitutionally—to consider that if the duty rested on the constituency to secure its Parliamentary representation, the expenses incurred in the discharge of that duty should be borne by the area represented. That duty was already recognised in connection with local government. Logically the burden was a local burden, and ought to be borne locally. But that need not prevent the House taking a course similar to that which it had taken in other instances, and making a grant in aid of local taxation to an amount equivalent to the burden cast upon the local area. If the matter were made a local burden the expenses would be kept to as low a limit as possible. He did not know that it was necessary to discuss the question of the undesirable candidate, but a fine might be exacted or there might be a second ballot. That, however, was a matter for future consideration. At any rate it was clear that the machinery which it was proposed to abolish ought not to be used for dealing with the matter. The Motion was regarded with the utmost sympathy by the Government, and he did not use the phrase in any emotional sense; by sympathy he meant practical sympathy.

Sir EDWARD CARSON (Dublin University): Will there be a Bill this year?

*Sir JOHN WALTON: I was just going to deal with that question. Perhaps my right hon. friend will think there are sufficient measures indicated in the King's Speech for this session.

Sir EDWARD CARSON: The reason I asked the question was that a similar measure was brought forward before and not proceeded with.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR (Liverpool, Scotland): A dissolution followed immediately.

*Sir JOHN WALTON said his right hon. friend would remember Mr. Bright's warning about trying to get too many omnibuses through Temple Bar, and there was no need to add to the measures which the Government had undertaken to pass. There was no immediate necessity with regard to this reform. [An Hon. Member: By-elections.] There might be a few by-elections, but the grievance in regard to them was relatively small. The main grievance was connected with general elections. The House might, without taking any very sanguine view with regard to the life of the Government, come to the conclusion that there was sufficient time for the measure to take the shape of a Bill and be submitted to the House.

Sir CARNE RASCH (Essex, Chelmsford) said he had some little experience in this case which might possibly interest the House. Some time ago he contested South-East Essex against Mr. W. H. Wills—that gentleman was a peer now, but he could not remember his name, they fought the bill of the returning officer, and the judge, His Honour Judge Abdy, knocked off 200 guineas. He did not blame the returning officer, whose own charges were fair and correct. They did not get all the money, because the lawyers got most of it, but they got more than the returning officer. If hon. Members opposite were to take the bull by the horns and put their fists in the face of the enemy they would do better than they did in present circumstances. Candidates were required to pay 5s. for the use for twenty-four hours of each of the wretched old biscuit-boxes into which the ballot papers were put, whilst if the whole lot were sold they would not fetch a sovereign with the returning officer thrown in. Another expensive item was the furnishing of the polling booth, which meant placing two chairs and a table in a wretched rabbit-hutch, where the intelligent voter put his cross generally against the wrong man. The cost of these was four or five guineas, while the value would not be 10s. All these things were relics of the time when a candidate was regarded by half the constituents as a milch cow and by the other half as a public enemy. He was glad the hon. Member had brought this question forward, and if he went to a division he should vote with him.

Question put and agreed to.

Resolved, That, in the opinion of this House, the Returning Officers' Expenses, and all other official charges in connection with Parliamentary Elections, should be defrayed out of public funds, and that a material reduction is possible in the present scale of charges allowed under the Parliamentary Elections (Returning Officers) Expenses Act, 1875.—(*Mr. Rowlands.*)

THE CHARITY COMMISSION.

Sir WALTER FOSTER (Derbyshire, Ilkeston) rose to call attention to the schemes of the Charity Commissioners; and to move, "That, in the opinion of this House, schemes of the Charity Commissioners for the reform, new constitution, or amendment of trust deeds of charities other than ecclesiastical charities should in all cases provide for the removal of disabilities of trustees in respect of their religious opinions, and for the election of a majority of the trustees by representative authorities." He said that a Select Committee which sat twenty years ago arrived at the conclusion that it was exceedingly desirable, in order to create public confidence in the administration of the charities, that the representative element should be fully recognised in all schemes of the Charity Commissioners for the ordering of charities in the future. After the report of that Committee, which was generally accepted as satisfactory, people looked forward to this rule being observed, and he believed that in many instances the Commissioners had endeavoured to carry it out. There had, however, from time to time been glaring instances when opportunities of doing away with the disabilities in regard to the old-fashioned office of trustee had been neglected in the formation of schemes. The Select Committee said that in all cases of the constitution of trustees it was desirable that as the administration of charitable trusts had not the stimulus of private interests at work they should have as the best available substitute direct official responsibility to the inhabitants of the district. That was the only way to insure that they got a perfect and unbiassed administration of public funds. He had called attention to this subject before, and, although he was then speaking to a House of Commons composed largely of Members of the present Opposition, he was beaten by a majority of only twenty-five when the normal Government majority was 130, which showed that that House was not very hostile to his contention in this matter. He on that occasion called attention to the scheme which dealt with the Hospital of St. Cross at Winchester, in regard to which the Charity Commissioners had neglected to provide for the representative principle. This institution came down from the middle ages and provided pensions for old people from various parts of the country. Under a scheme of the Charity Commissioners the only elected trustee was to be a member of the Town Council and they coupled with that the condition that he should be a member of the Church of England. This was a humiliating and degrading condition, as the charity was open to those professing all religious creeds. Moreover, a Mayor of Winchester, who was a Nonconformist had under this regulation been debarred from taking part in the administration of this charity. That condition ought to be abolished by some Resolution of the House and, if necessary, by an Act of Parliament to prevent such invidious distinction being made in the future. He felt it his duty in 1901 to bring this matter before the House and to argue that the principle of administering these schemes should be as far as possible to introduce the representative element, and he put this Resolution on the Paper to-day because he wanted the Charity Commissioners in drawing up such schemes in the future to pay more attention to the recommendations of the Select Committee to which he had referred. It was desirable in the public administration of these charities that public men — representatives of various public bodies—in the districts should have a voice in the administration of these public funds. He admitted that in some respects the Charity Commissioners were in a difficult position, and the hon. Member for the Elland Division would probably say there were legal difficulties in the way of carrying out this Resolution. In the first place charities over the value of £50 did not come under the Charity Commissioners except at the request of the trustees who might apply to the Commissioners to alter or modify their scheme. In such a case it seemed to him that the Commissioners might very well say to trustees that if they had the trouble of drawing up a scheme and making various alterations for the benefit of the charity and to ease the labours of the trustees, they on the other hand must give some concession and enable the Commissioners to make the scheme more popular. It was surely out of date that the old system of co-opted Members should be kept up. Personally, such Members might be estimable gentlemen, but they lacked the virtue which only came from a representative capacity. He had known charities with huge incomes mismanaged and used for private ends because there had been only coopted trustees. The principle of cooptation had been tried, and had failed in the experience of all men who had to do with public institutions, and it ought not to be continued in the administration of these charities. He wanted the Charity Commissioners of the future to do away as thoroughly as they could with the principle of cooptation, and to introduce the sweetening influence in the administration of these charities of electing men who belonged to representative bodies in the localities. In addition to that he would like to see the Charity Commissioners do away with those mediæval restrictions in regard to the religious views of those who administered a public charity. He did not wish to interfere with charities concerning a religious persuasion, but there ought to be no restrictions as to a man's religion when appointed a trustee on other charitable bodies, and on these grounds he urged this Resolution to the favourable consideration of the House. It might be said that if they interfered too much with these schemes the Charity Commissioners might lay themselves open to legal proceedings. He would rather see that than take no steps in the right direction, because he believed a few such proceedings would awaken public opinon to the gravity of this abuse, and would soon bring about necessary legislation to prevent the Charity Commissioners from being so harassed in the execution of their public duty. He did not think they in the new House of Commons, filled with a new spirit, and passing resolutions almost of a revolutionary character, such as had been done this evening and on previous occasions this session, ought to hesitate in taking a step such as he asked to-night in order to widen the bounds of liberty in the choice of trustees for the administration of public funds, and do away with restrictions which were out of date with regard to the religion of a man who managed funds for the benefit of his fellow-citizens.

Mr. GODDARD (Ipswich) seconded the Resolution. He said it was difficult to conceive of any real objection to the Resolution. It used to be said in regard to these charities that such charities belonged to the Church of England and therefore all the trustees should belong to the Church of England. He submitted that that was quite an obsolete contention in the present day, and the practice in all modernised charity schemes had been to open the door so that a much more representative body of trustees could be appointed, representative not merely of public opinion and of the public interest, but representative also of the various religious denominations who took just as much interest in these charities as did the particular churches with whom it might have been they originated. It used to be contended that the recipients of the charities which would be affected by the Resolution were compelled to attend services of the Church of England, but he was sure every hon. Member must know very well that there were a great many charity schemes now where the recipients still had to attend services of the Church of England in order to receive the charity, but where the trustees were not necessarily members of the Church of England. He himself a year or two ago was elected to be chairman of a board of charity trustees, although he was a Nonconformist, and all the recipients of this charity had to attend the Church of England in order to receive the special gifts. He thought it was time that this sort of practice should be done away with. There might have been a reason for it originally. No doubt in olden time the church door was the easiest place for the distribution of doles and charities given under these schemes, but the time had now come when all such barriers of intolerance might be swept away, and when the representation on public charities should include every part of the community.

Motion proposed, "That in the opinion of this House, schemes of the Charity Commissioners for the reform, new constitution, or amendment of trust deeds of charities, other than ecclesiastical charities, should in all cases provide for the removal of disabilities of trustees in respect of their religious opinions, and for the election of a majority of the trustees by representative authorities."—(*Sir Walter Foster.*)

Mr. RAWLINSON (Cambridge University) said he ventured to say a few words in opposition to this Resolution, which might be characterised as dangerous and ill-considered. He took it that the desire of the House would be to encourage rather than to discourage people of a philanthropic turn of mind in giving and leaving their money to charitable purposes. Such a Motion as this must deter, he imagined, the vast majority of those who left their money for philanthropic purposes from doing anything of the kind, for the majority of those people left and gave their money from religious motives, and not from motives unconnected with any sectarian body. Take, for example, one of the greater philanthropic bequests in London, the Polytechnic. When the late Mr. Quintin Hogg left his money for that object he was not actuated in any way by any feelings of love or affection for the Church of England, and he might have objected to any member of the Church of England being on the governing body. He did not make such a stipulation, but he might have made it well within his rights, and what right would the hon. Gentleman who moved this Resolution have to say it was public money? It was not public money, but was left by an individual for a particular purpose, and who was actuated by a particular motive. Were they to have a trust of that kind governed, forsooth, not by men who had put their hands in their pockets, but by representatives of local bodies? He ventured to suggest that this was a dangerous and unfair Motion. He would turn to various other institutions in London which had done unmixed good to the community; he referred especially to the institutions founded by the public schools and universities of this land. Was it to be said that the people who had gone to great sacrifice to find money in aid of one particular Church or sect were to be told that they were not to have the right of nominating the trustees, that what the mover of the Resolution described as mediæval distinctions were to be swept away; that the question of whether a man was an atheist or a religious man was to be wiped away, and that the control was to be left to a local body in the district where the charity happened to be situated? Such a Motion was unjust and unfair in the extreme. The hon. Member who seconded the Resolution was a religious philanthropist, and had founded a certain institution in Ipswich which certainly had done most excellent work; but how would the hon. Gentleman like a Churchman and a Conservative to be put upon the governing body of that particular charity? Surely the person who paid the piper was entitled to call the tune; and if any one were philanthropic enough to give money, by will or in his lifetime, to found any particular charity, he had sufficient confidence in this Parliament, in spite of what the mover of the Resolution said about the new spirit, to distinguish between what belonged to them and what belonged to somebody else. This Motion was not only unjust and revoluntionary, but absolutely dishonest in its effect, as tending to take away from people that which was their own, and it would not be for the public good, as it would discourage people who were anxious to give their money for philanthropic purposes.

MR. RAINY (Kilmarnock Burghs) said that whatever the intentions of the Motion were, the question it raised was, how far the power of the dead hand was to govern the liberties of the living people? It was very obvious that if certain monies were received, say for university settlements, it would be very improper for any outside person to interfere with them; but the proposition was that if the people he was referring to were to go to the Charity Commissioners to get powers to do something which they could not themselves do, they departed from the original trust, and the question should be decided in accordance with common-sense and common justice. There was a remarkable instance during the last Parliament of how strict legality might do gross injustice not only in the case of a corporation, but over the length and breadth of a great nation, and that nation was still suffering from the processes of law. Therefore he was not content to sit still to-night and not protest against the idea that any man, however rich, benevolent, or clever, might dispose of that which was really the property of the State. His proposition was that no person, however far-seeing, could foresee the conditions in which ultimately his money must be applied. In the process of time all trusts must lapse, and when a trust lapsed it was forfeited to the Crown and became the property of the State. He could quite understand that if there was no guiding principle laid down by this House or by those responsible in these matters, it was a most difficult business for the Charity Commissioners, with all the problems which came before them. He was not disposed to criticise harshly any action they had taken, but he did want to protest against the idea that any test of a sectarian nature was necessarily a religious test. It was one of the most pernicious doctrines prevalent in England that any one who did not agree altogether with the Church of England was a non-religious person. For his part, he refused to circumscribe the kingdom of Christ within the limits of the Church of England, or any other particular body of Christians. A remark fell from the hon. Gentleman who last spoke that they might destroy religion by broadening the basis of a charity in such a fashion that the Christians of this country might have a common share in it.

Mr. RAWLINSON said he never mentioned anything of the kind. The whole basis of his argument was that those who left charities, for instance to Nonconformist religious bodies, were entitled to have that intention respected, and the same argument would apply to Jews, or Roman Catholics, or whatever religion they chose.

Mr. RAINY said the remark just made by the hon. Gentleman brought out exactly what he wanted to call attention to. The hon. Gentleman talked about his Church as a religion, and all other Christian Churches as other religions. It was not so. There was one Christian community.

Mr. RAWLINSON said that surely the hon. Gentleman had not so argued. He had said distinctly that each member of each religious body was entitled to leave his money as he thought fit to members of a particular religious body. He (Mr. Rawlinson) did not even mention the fact that he was a member of the Church of England, although he was one.

Mr. RAINY said his argument was that in so far as both the Church of England and Nonconformists were common to the Christian religion it was not necessarily an inherent lapse of trust if a property left to one or the other passed from one body to the other. [Opposition cries of "Oh."] Well, he would not press the point, as it seemed to be a matter of contention. The matter he wished to come to was that if there was a way of carrying out the original intention of the donor in its completeness the attempt should be made, but when it became apparent, as it had in many cases, that this was impossible, what was merely accidental should not rule the whole trust, but the intentions of general benevolence should prevail, and there should be a constitution whereby those who were the living representatives, who could alone benefit under the trust, should have a voice to decide what should be done with that which was left for their benefit and on their behalf.

*__Sir FRANCIS POWELL__ (Wigan) said he wished to confine his remarks almost entirely to educational charities. He desired, however, to express regret that such pointed allusions should have been made in preceding speeches to the Church of England. Those who made those remarks entirely forgot that there were large Nonconformist institutions in existence. In his old university-town of Cambridge, for instance, there was a splendid institution under the management of the Wesleyan body—the Leys Schools. It would be little less than a scandal and an outrage if in the event of any alteration in the scheme governing that institution it should be liable to the provisions of this Resolution. It would be practically confiscation. That was by no means the only school in the hands of the Wesleyan body. There were such schools in Yorkshire and other counties, and the remark he made in reference to the Leys School would apply to them also. Speaking as an educationist, he respectfully differed from the adverse remarks as to co-opted trustees. He was a member of important grammar schools under the management of a scheme framed by the Endowed Schools Charity Commission. There were co-opted members, and he ventured to say that their services were equal in value to the services of the most intelligent and assiduous members. One great advantage in co-option was that when a vacancy occurred the other trustees knew what was the real element in their body. The gentleman must be some one cognisant with the management of real estate, and he would look round amongst his acquaintances, and find a man best suited to act for him. He felt quite sure that no election by an outside body would meet the difficulty.

SIR WALTER FOSTER pointed out that educational trusts did not come under the Charity Commissioners and, therefore, they were not affected by his Resolution. [" Yes, they do."]

*MR. SPEAKER: Educational charities would come under this Resolution. The only charities which would be excluded would be those which come within the four corners of the Endowed Schools Acts. There are a great many educational charities which are not under the Endowed Schools Acts, but they would all come under the Resolution of the hon. Member.

*SIR FRANCIS POWELL: Surely, they would never suggest that such schools should be governed on the principle of popular election; it would be impossible to work a great grammar school, for instance, upon such lines. Then there were schools for persons suffering under some kind of infirmity, such as the Blind School in Manchester, Such institutions were maintained by voluntary subscriptions and how could they claim that they should be placed under a popularly elected Board? The same argument applied to hospitals. If the House examined this proposal closely they would find difficulties upon every side. Nobody denied the necessity of changing trustees from time to time, but it did not follow that all the principles upon which charities were founded should be abolished and everything sent to the wind. This Resolution was of a sweeping character and carried everything before it, and if adopted he felt sure it would produce an amount of embarrassment which the framers had not contemplated, and it would do a great amount of injury to charities, more especially to those of an educational character.

*MR. TREVELYAN (Yorkshire, W.R., Elland) said that this resolution had come upon him at a rather early stage of his connection with the Charity Commissioners, but he was glad that the question had been raised so soon in the existence of the present Parliament. He reminded hon. Members that the Charity Commissioners were not armed with arbitrary powers of interfering with any charity at any time, and providing schemes for any charity out of their own brains. That was not exactly their position, for their action was circumscribed in various ways. They were bound to consider the wishes of the pious founders, though they had also to modernise those wishes and intentions. The proposals of his hon. friend had, he thought, been the subject of misconception on the Opposition side. They related to charities which were non-ecclesiastical, and it undoubtedly was the desire of the Commissioners in those cases where there was no apparent object in the trust in having people of a particular denomination upon it to open the position of trustee to people of all denominations. But they could not in all cases undertake to override the express wishes of the founder if the latter had chosen deliberately to leave the charity to the administration of men likeminded to himself. He was told that as a matter of fact there were few such cases among non-ecclesiastical charities. He hoped his hon. friend would be satisfied with the assurance that the object of the Commissioners would be, so far as was legal and reasonable, to remove such limitations. He would now pass on to what he thought was the more important part of the Resolution, and that was the representation of public bodies such as borough or parish councils on boards of trustees under new schemes. He had been gathering information with regard to the action of the Charity Commissioners during the last few years, and in most of the schemes representative trustees were included to strengthen the boards, and in many of them the representative trustees were in an actual majority. He would say frankly that his own sympathies were strongly in favour of as large a representative element as possible. There were obvious advantages from adopting this principle, because close corporations were never desirable, and indifference very often followed in consequence of the methods of management not being scrutinised by representatives of public bodies, and, therefore, it was in the interests of those charities that there should be public representation. No doubt if the founders of the oldest of these charities had lived in these days they would have had recourse to public bodies as being the best means of finding out who were the important citizens most suited to administer their charity. It would be the continued policy of the Commissioners to give an increasing share of consideration to the claims of public bodies. But it could not always be done. The Charity Commissioners were not all-powerful people, and he thought legislation might be required to carry out what was now proposed. The Commissioners generally waited until trustees expressed a wish that they should interfere, and it was only in very flagrant cases where the Commissioners originated their interference. With smaller charities they were sometimes able to do that, and the Commissioners had exercised a compulsory jurisdiction at times. They had, however, no power to exercise original jurisdiction over charities with an income of more than £50 a year, and in such cases the trustees had to come to the Charity Commissioners if they wished them to take action. Consequently it was part of the policy of the Charity Commission not to lay down any cast-iron rule, which might deter such applications in cases where they had no compulsory jurisdiction. The Charity Commissioners desired an extension of their powers, so that larger charities might come within their scope. If the

Resolution were amended by the insertion of the word "possible," so that it would read "in all possible cases," he would not be so averse to it as he was in the form it at present stood.

SIR WALTER FOSTER: I will accept the suggestion of my hon. friend to insert the word "possible." My Resolution is intended to be a direction rather than a command.

Amendment agreed to.

*COLONEL LEGGE (St. George's, Hanover Square) thought that neither the Mover of the Resolution nor the hon. Member representing the Charity Commissioners understood the effect of the Resolution, and, therefore, it ought to be withdrawn. It was not treating the House with proper respect to bring the Resolution forward in this way, and the best course would be for the right hon. Member to take his Resolution back, remodel it, and bring it forward again in a new form.

*SIR EDWARD CLARKE (City of London) joined in the protest which had been made against the course which had been taken by the hon. Member for Elland. He understood the speech made made by the representative of the Charity Commissioners was one directed against the Resolution as it stood on the Paper, which he said was quite unacceptable because it appeared to pledge the House to direct the Commissioners to do that which they could not by law obey. The Resolution was now to be altered by putting in the word "possible." He wished to point out what an absurdity that alteration was. It could not be suggested that the original Resolution was intended to apply to all cases possible and impossible. The word "possible" was implied in the original Resolution, and now it was contended that the insertion of this magic word would alter the Resolution so much that it at once became acceptable to the representative of the Charity Commissioners. Really, the Resolution was an absurdity on the face of it. The Commissioners could only be called upon to act in certain important cases. and when they were called upon by the trustees to deal with a charity it was on the ground that in certain respects the provisions of the trust had become inapplicable to existing circumstances, and then the duty of the Charity Commissioners was to draw up a scheme which should be as nearly as possible the former and original scheme, only altering it where it was absolutely necessary. The Charity Commissioners had no further right than that. The hon. Member who moved this Resolution said its effect might be that there would be some action taken in Chancery, and he thought that would be a good thing, and would be very useful. He thought so too from many points of view, but until the law was different from what it was to-day those who wished to institute experiments with regard to the power of the Charity Commissioners would only find that the Court was obliged to decide against them over and over again, and no matter how many actions were brought the result would be the same. Under these circumstances, surely it was unreasonable to ask the House to pledge itself in this very odd way to a Resolution which could have no operative effect at all, which had been shown by the representative of the Charity Commissioners in this House to be inapplicable to the circumstances as they at present existed, and which did not appear to be understood by the hon. Member who moved it.

*Mr. BRIDGEMAN (Shropshire, Oswestry) said the hon. Member who represented the Charity Commissioners had stated that, if those pious founders who lived years ago, and left money to institutions connected with religion, to be distributed by people belonging to the same religion as themselves, had lived in the present day, the probability was that instead of leaving as trustees of their charity permanent boards consisting of members of their own religious bodies, they would have consulted the local municipal authorities to find out who were the most suitable people to administer their charities. Personally, he had not heard of many instances himself of people with charitable intentions leaving their money to borough or parish councils to be administered for charitable purposes, and he could not believe that the people whose charities were aimed at by the Resolution were in any doubt as to their intentions in leaving their money. He did not think the mover of this Resolution had made out any case of hardship under the present law. He had mentioned one case in which the Mayor of Winchester was disqualified on account of his religious opinions, but he did not allege that in consequence of that disqualification the particular charity to which he referred was badly administered. The hon. Member for Ilkeston, according to his own confession, did not realise the scope of his Resolution, and therefore he would ask him not to press it now, but to take time to consider the exact nature of the proposal which he intended to move. The seconder of the Resolution stated that the intention of the Resolution was to take money belonging to the Church of England and give it to others to distribute. No doubt many people were interested in money which did not belong to them, but that was no reason why they should be allowed to administer it.

And, it being Midnight, the debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed to-morrow.

FOREIGN COUNTRIES (PAYMENT OF MEMBERS).

Address for "Return showing, with respect to the United States of America and the countries of Europe, whether payment of Members of the Legislature obtains; the amounts or scale of such payment; and whether it includes, or whether there is in addition thereto, any allowance for travelling expenses or the privilege of free passes on the railways of those countries."—(*Mr. John Ward.*)

REDISTRIBUTION OF SEATS.

Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 6th March; *Mr. D. A. Thomas*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 79.]

PARLIAMENT (MEETING &c.).

Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 6th March; *Mr. D. A. Thomas*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 80.]

Adjourned at two minutes after Twelve o'clock.

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Wednesday, 7th March, 1906.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Baker Street and Waterloo Railway Bill; Gas Companies (Removal of Sulphur Restrictions) Bill. Read a second time, and committed.

Midland Railway Bill (by Order). Second Reading deferred till Tuesday 20th March (Evening Sitting).

Metropolitan Police Provisional Order Bill (by Order). Read a second time, and committed.

PRIVATE LEGISLATION PROCEDURE (SCOTLAND) ACT, 1892.

The Chairman of Ways and Means reported, That, after conferring with the Chairman of Committees of the House of Lords, for the purpose of determining in which House of Parliament the respective Bills, under The Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899, should be first considered, they had determined that the following Bills should originate in the House of Lords, viz.:—1. Highland and Great North of Scotland Railways Amalgamation. 2. Scottish Union and National Insurance Company.

Report to lie upon the Table.

PETITIONS.

LAND VALUES (ASSESSMENT AND RATING) BILL.

Petition from Croydon, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

PUBLIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS (RELIGIOUS TEACHING).

Two Petitions from Stanton Fitzwarren, against alteration of Law; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

ROYAL UNIVERSITY OF IRELAND.

Copy presented, of Twenty-fourth Report of the Royal University of Ireland, being for the year 1905 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

FOREIGN TRADE AND COMMERCE.

Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 6th March; *Mr. Lloyd-George*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 81.]

SHOP HOURS ACT 1904.

Copy presented, of Order made by the Council of the County Borough of Gateshead, and confirmed by the Secretary of State for the Home Department, fixing the Hours of Closing for certain Shops within the Borough [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

AUSTRALIA.

Copy presented, of Address from the House of Representatives and Resolution of the Senate on the subject of Home Rule for Ireland, and the Replies thereto [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Sub-officers and Assistants in the Dublin Postal Districts.

Mr. NANNETTI (Dublin, College Green): To ask the Postmaster-General how many sub-officers there are in the Dublin postal district; how many assistants are employed in these offices; what is the aggregate amount of the salaries paid to the sub-postmasters in charge of these offices last year; what is the aggregate amount of the salaries paid to the assistants engaged in these offices during the same time; are the sub-postmasters in question required to pay out of their own stipends not only the assistants' salaries but also office rent, cost of repairs, fire, light, and stationery; what was the average salary of a sub-postmaster in the Dublin postal district last year, after deducting the expenses entailed in carrying on the postal and telegraph duties entrusted to him.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) I have not yet been able to obtain the Returns asked for by the hon. Member, but as soon as the information is available I will communicate with him.

Programme of Work for Pembroke Dockyard.

MR. OWEN PHILIPPS (Pembroke and Haverfordwest): To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether it is possible yet to make any statement with regard to the programme of work to be provided for Pembroke Dock in the next financial year.

(*Answered by Mr. Edmund Robertson.*) The programme of work for Pembroke Yard for 1906–7 has not yet been issued, but provision is being made for advancement in the construction of the armoured cruisers "Warrior" and "Defence," together with the necessary maintenance of yard craft, etc., and miscellaneous services. This programme does not admit of laying down an additional new ship during 1906–7.

Discharges from Sheerness Dockyard.

MR. NAPIER (Kent, Faversham): To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty if he will state why the discharges from the Royal Dockyard at Sheerness, from 1st April, 1905, to 31st January, 1906, amounting to 33 per cent. of the men employed at the former date, have been proportionately so much more numerous than the discharges at the other British dockyards, which on the average amount to 19 per cent. of the men employed at the date in question.

(*Answered by Mr. Edmund Robertson.*) The work of Sheerness dockyard in the past consisted to a great extent in the construction of sloops, and the repair of vessels of this and similar types. The decision to build no more sloops, and to withdraw from the fleet vessels of small fighting efficiency, has appreciably reduced the class of work which the yard is capable of undertaking. The comparatively large reductions at Sheerness may, therefore, be regarded as the direct outcome of the recent re-organisation and re-distribution of the Fleet.

Ireland and the Royal Commission on Canals.

MR. O'SHEE (Waterford, W.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether, in view of the appointment of a Royal Commission on the subject of canals in Great Britain, he will consider the advisability of that Commission including Ireland in the scope of its inquiries; whether, in that event, some additional members of the Commission can be appointed to deal with Irish canals only; or, in the alternative, whether he will recommend the appointment of a Viceregal Commission.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) Ireland is included in the scope of the Canals Commission, and two gentlemen resident in Ireland have been appointed Commissioners. It will, in my opinion, be an advantage to Ireland that the ability and experience of the Commissioners as a whole should be brought to bear on the very important question of developing internal navigation in Ireland.

Working of Labourers Acts in Ireland.

MR. O'SHEE: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether, in view of the promised Labourers Bill for Ireland, he will have printed as a Parliamentary Paper the Reports on the working and administration of the existing Labourers Acts furnished in 1903 or early in 1904 by the inspectors of the Local Government Board; and whether he will include in such Paper two or more examples of Reports of inspectors of the Local Government Board as to local inquiries in relation to typical schemes under the Acts, and two or more examples of Reports of the proceedings and decisions of the Privy Council, in reference to petitions from the decisions of the Local Government Board under the Acts.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) I have not seen the Reports referred to in the first part of the Question. I am informed that they were intended for the private and confidential information of the Local Government Board and of its President, the Chief Secretary of the day; and I find that it was so stated by the right hon. Member for Dover in reply to a Question in this House on the 15th June, 1904.† If the hon. Member thinks that examples of the Reports referred to in the latter part of the Question will serve his purpose, I shall have no objection to furnish them if he moves for them in the ordinary way.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cxxxvi., 154.

Importation of Irish Pigs into England.

MR. J. P. FARRELL (Longford, N.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether any modification will be made in the present order against the importation of Irish pigs into England; and, if so, when.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The movement of store swine from Ireland to Great Britain was prohibited by an order of the English Board of Agriculture which came into operation in January, 1905. That order has recently been modified by a further order of the same Board, which came into force on the 1st instant, and which allows store swine to be sent direct from their homestead in Ireland to a place of destination in Great Britain subject to specified conditions as to declaration, licence, and mode of transit, and to the further requirement that the animals must in every instance be detained and isolated for twenty-eight days following arrival at the destination indicated in the licence. I have sent a copy of this order to the hon. Member.

Date of Next Meeting of Land Sub-Commission at Ballymahon.

MR. J. P. FARRELL: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland when the next Sub-Commission for the hearing of fair rent applications in the union of Ballymahon, county Longford, will sit, and where.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The Land Commission inform me that the cases in question will be heard at Longford on the 22nd instant.

Fair Rents on the Earl of Annesley Estate.

MR. MACVEAGH (Down, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will supply a list of fair rents fixed by the Sub-Commissions of the Irish Land Commission on the estate of the Earl of Annesley, in county Down, in the rural districts of Banbridge, Kilkeel, and Downpatrick, since the 1st day of November, 1904, showing the old and new rents, and percentage of reduction, and giving in each case the name of the lay Commissioner on whose inspection and report the rent was fixed.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The Land Commission inform me that the decisions in the fair rent cases referred to were announced in open court. In addition, each party was notified of the result, and and a list of the decisions was posted at the court house in which the hearing took place. The names of the legal and lay Assistant Commissioners, who adjudicate upon fair rent applications, are also stated in the published lists. This is the general rule, and the Land Commission are of opinion that no useful public purpose would be served by making a separate return in reference to a particular estate.

Erection of Labourers' Cottages in Ireland—Legal Costs.

MR. LIDDELL (Down, W.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that under the first scheme under the Labourers Acts of the Banbridge (county Down) Rural District Council nine cottages were built at an average cost, including price of land, of £205 each, and that the lawyers' fees in connection with these nine cottages amounted to £450, or an average of £50 per cottage; and whether in the Labourers Bill which the Government have promised he will introduce amendments to simplify and cheapen the procedure, and by which the lawyers' charges may be reduced.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The records of the Local Government Board show that the average cost of each labourer's cottage in the district referred to has been about £340, and that the engineering and legal expenditure in each case amounts to almost £100. This excessive expenditure has been the subject of remonstrance on the part of the Board. One of the chief objects of the Labourers Bill which the Government intend to introduce is to cheapen and simplify the procedure of the existing Labourers Acts.

Fair Rent Appeals at Letterkenny—Delay in Delivery of Judgment.

MR. MCVEIGH (Donegal, E.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland what is the cause of the delay in the delivering of judgments in the fair rent appeals from Letterkenny, county Donegal, heard by the Land Commission at Londonderry on the

21st of November last; and when it is likely that judgment will be delivered.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) I am informed by the Land Commission that the delay in delivering judgment in the cases referred to has arisen through the absence on circuit of the Judicial Commissioner before whom they were heard. Judgment will be given in these cases before the end of the present month.

Purchase of Holdings on the Warburton Estate.

Mr. DELANY (Queen's County, Ossory): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he proposes to introduce legislation, or otherwise provide a remedy for the position of the tenants on the Warburton, Queen's County, property, and others similarly situated, which estate has been in the Land Judge's Court for the past twenty years, so as to enable them to purchase their holdings under the Act of 1903.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The case of these tenants is doubtless one for which it might be desirable to make some special provision; but I cannot, as at present advised, undertake to introduce a measure for this purpose. I will, however, look into the matter at a convenient opportunity, and see whether it may be possible to find some means of dealing with it at some future time.

Sale of Estate of late J. Dunn at Aughaboe, Queen's County.

Mr. DELANY: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutentant of Ireland whether he can say if the Estates Commissioners have acquired the untenanted land belonging to the estate of the late Jeremiah Dunne, Aughaboe, Queen's County, which the Land Judge proposed to dispose of on the 26th February last.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The Estates Commissioners' offer for the purchase of the unsold portion of the estate in question came before the Land Judge on Monday last, when the learned Judge postponed the consideration of the matter for a fortnight in order that he might make a further communication to the Commissioners.

Rates of Mortality among Natives Employed in Transvaal Mines.

Mr. HILLS (Durham): To ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether, in view of the rates of mortality among natives employed in the Transvaal gold mines, coming from British Central Africa, Rhodesia, Mozambique, and Damaraland, further recruiting of labourers from those regions will be stopped.

(*Answered by Mr. Churchill.*) I have to refer the hon. Member to the statement at page 44 of 2819, from which he will see that it is proposed to stop recruiting from certain tropical areas, unless the mortality returns show marked improvement. Damaraland was closed as a recruiting area last year by the German Government.

Death Rates amongst Chinese, White Labourers, and Natives in African Mines.

Mr. HILLS: To ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies what is the average death rate among Chinese coolies, white labourers, and African labourers, respectively, employed in the Transvaal gold mines.

(*Answered by Mr. Churchill.*) The death rate among Chinese coolies for 1905 was 18·386 per thousand, among African labourers 47·13 per thousand; the mortality among white labourers on the mines is not separately given from that among the white population generally.

Upkeep of Colonial Audit Branch.

Mr. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick): To ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether the Colonial Audit Branch, under the Controller and Auditor-General, is paid for out of Parliamentary funds; and, if not, how much is the amount of appropriations-in-aid received by the Exchequer and Audit Department for the housing, etc., of this Colonial Audit Branch; and why this amount is not clearly stated in the Estimates.

(*Answered by Mr. McKenna.*) The Colonial Audit Branch is not paid for out of Parliamentary funds. No appropriations-in-aid are received by the Exchequer and Audit Department for the housing, etc., of the Branch, who are accommodated in the same building with the main office of the Exchequer and Audit Department.

Standards for Civil Service Excise, Customs, and Second Division Examinations.

MR. O'DOHERTY (Donegal, N.): To ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether he will state what is the system adopted by the Civil Service Commissioners in adjudging the papers of candidates at the various examinations for Excise, Customs, and Second Division; and whether the standards fixed by the Civil Service Commissioners have been promulgated to one college only.

(*Answered by Mr. McKenna.*) The maximum of marks obtainable for the various subjects is fixed by the published regulations in the case of competitions for Assistants of Excise and Assistants of Customs, but not in those for Second Division or Customs Port Service. In the case of the two competitions last mentioned the Commissioners fix the maxima, care being taken that equal weight should always be assigned to optional subjects. The examiners then assign to the several candidates such proportion of the maximum marks as their work in each subject may be judged to deserve. No information is given by the Commissioners to any college or institution which is not accessible to all.

Suggested Government Supervision of British Insurance Companies.

MR. FIELD: To ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he is aware that in the Dominion of Canada all insurance companies operate under strict Government supervision; and that the Finance Minister requested the head of the Insurance Department to prepare a special report showing in detail how the Government supervision of insurance companies is carried on; and whether he will make inquiries into this subject with a view to applying the Canadian principle to British insurance companies.

(*Answered by Mr. Lloyd-George.*) My attention has been directed to the facts referred to in the hon. Member's Question. The Life Insurance Act, 1870, already imposes upon insurance companies certain obligations in the interests of the insured, and as at present advised I am not disposed to make these obligations more stringent.

French Import Duty on Umbrella Fittings.

MR. SAMUEL ROBERTS (Sheffield, Ecclesall): To ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he is aware that for many years previous to 1892 the integral and indispensable parts of an umbrella, such as slides and ferrules, etc., made of common brass, were subject to an import duty into France of sixteen francs per 100 kilos. (or roughly 12s. 8d. per two cwt.), and that at this duty it was possible to do a good trade at a small profit; but that in 1892 there was a considerable advance in the French tariffs, and through wrong classification these small brass articles forming indispensable parts of the commonest umbrellas were included with the dispensable parts, such as gold and silver-plated mounts, and charged at the duty of 100 francs per 100 kilos., as fixed for imitation jewellery; and whether he will cause representations to be made to the French Government with a view to having the classification rectified, and these duties readjusted.

(*Answered by Mr. Lloyd-George.*) The facts are as stated. We are at present in communication with the French Government on the subject.

Suggested Opening of a Sub-Post Office in Ballymahon Street, Longford.

MR. J. P. FARRELL: To ask the Postmaster-General whether he will, with a view to faciliating the postage of letters and parcels in Longford, consent to the opening of a sub-post office in Ballymahon Street, Longford.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) I will make inquiry whether the business done in the locality would justify the opening of a sub-post office in Ballymahon Street, Longford, and will communicate the result to the hon. Member.

Delay in Completion of Whitefriargate Bridge in Hull.

SIR SEYMOUR KING (Hull, Central): To ask the President of the Local Government Board whether his attention has been drawn to the delay on the part of the North Eastern Railway Company in finishing the new Whitefriargate bridge in Hull; whether he is aware that, under the contract, the bridge ought to have been finished by the 23rd October last; and whether in view of the loss the tradesmen in Whitefriargate are suffering, in consequence of the neglect of the railway company to proceed with due diligence with the work with which Parliament has entrusted them, he can exert pressure to prevent the company using their powers to the detriment of the town of Hull.

(*Answered by Mr. John Burns.*) I understand that complaints have been made to the effect above mentioned. It would be matter of satisfaction to me to learn that the bridge was completed, but I have no control over the company in the matter.

Irish Tenders for Supply of Drugs to English Boards of Guardians.

DR. AMBROSE (Mayo, W.): To ask the President of the Local Government Board whether tenders for medicines and appliances from Irish druggists and manufacturers will be considered by English boards of guardians; and whether any Irish tenders have ever been refused.

(*Answered by Mr. John Burns.*) There is nothing in the regulations with respect to tenders to prevent boards of guardians in England and Wales from considering tenders from Irish firms. Whether such tenders have ever been refused I am unable to say.

Ventilation of Army Clothing Factory at Pimlico.

SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Departmant what Reports have recently been received from His Majesty's inspectors of factories as to the ventilation of the Pimlico Clothing Factory; and what was the date of the last visit paid by His Majesty's women inspectors.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Gladstone.*) As a result of the conference that took place last summer between the representatives of the two Departments, instructions were given by the War Office for the preparation of plans of an improved system of ventilation for the factory. In reply to a recent inquiry, I was informed by the Army Council that the matter is still under consideration, but that they hoped before long to communicate full details of the proposed improvements. The last visit paid by a lady inspector was on the 10th April last.

Home Charges on Annual Expenditure of India.

DR. RUTHERFORD (Middlesex, Brentford): To ask the Secretary of State for India if he will state the chief items and amounts chargeable on India under Home charges, the total amount expended under Home charges for the last five years, and the proportion of Home charges to the annual expenditure of India.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Morley.*) The information asked for has already, so far as concerns the period up to and including 1903–4, been laid before Parliament in the annual Returns entitled "Home Accounts of the Government of India." It has been repeated more briefly in the "Financial Statements of the Government of India," annually presented to Parliament. It has also been summarised in the following Papers which are annually presented, viz., (1) Explanatory Memorandum by the Secretary of State for India, (2) Statistical Abstract relating to British India, and (3) Statement exhibiting the Moral and Material Progress of India. The gross expenditure in England charged against Revenue in 1904–5 was as follows:—

	£
Interest and management of debt and payment of interest and annuities on account of railways	9,762,193
Payments in connection with Civil Departments in India, excluding stores	382,924
India Office, including Auditor's and Store Departments	193,753
Army effective charges, excluding stores	1,474,535
Stores of all kinds charged against Revenue	2,964,196
Furlough allowances	218,692
Pensions, civil and military	4,467,464
	£19,463,757

Besides these payments, the outlay on stores, etc., for the construction of State railways and irrigation works was £1,502,352. The gross expenditure in England forms about one-fourth of the total annual expenditure of the Government of India.

Increased Cost of placing Majors holding Staff Appointments on List of Officers extra-Regimentally Employed.

Sir ROBERT HOBART (Hampshire, New Forest): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether he will state the estimated charge that would be placed upon the taxes if majors in the Army, who have been passed over for the appointment of second in command by reason of their now holding staff appointments, were at once placed on the list of officers extra-regimentally employed, instead of being retained, as at present, on the lists of regiments; and also whether he will state the present system on which these officers are eventually placed on the special list of officers extra-regimentally employed.

(*Answered by Mr Secretary Haldane.*) At the present moment there are only four officers so situated, and the immediate extra cost of placing them on an extra-regimental list would be £400 a year. Further, on vacating their staff appointments they would be placed on half-pay and so would increase the Non-effective Vote, but the calculation of this latter cost would, at the present moment, be impracticable. As regards the last part of the Question, as these officers have foregone further regimental promotion, the only way by which they can reach the extra-regimentally employed list, is by promotion in due course to half-pay lieutenant-colonelcies.

Rebuilding of Piershill Cavalry Barracks, Edinburgh.

Major ANSTRUTHER-GRAY (St. Andrews Burghs): To ask the Secretary of State for War when it is proposed to rebuild the cavalry barracks at Piershill, Edinburgh.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) As I have already explained to the House, all questions of building cavalry barracks depend upon the general military policy, and at the present moment I am not in a position to come to any decision on this policy.

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

Naval Expenditure.

Mr. BELLAIRS (Lynn Regis): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether he is aware that the French Budget Commission calculate that 70 per cent. of the French expenditure on new construction is returned to the country in wages and payments for goods made in the country; and whether he can give an approximate calculation of a similar character for British expenditure on new construction.

*The SECRETARY to the ADMIRALTY (Mr. Edmund Robertson, Dundee): I have not seen the calculation to which the hon. Member refers, and, as regards British expenditure, I am advised that, while it is impossible to make an exact calculation, it is believed that much more than 70 per cent. of the expenditure on new construction is returned to the country in the way indicated. In the case of Navy Votes as a whole, the proportion so returned would be even higher.

Walton-on-the-Naze Lifeboat.

Mr. A. L. LEVER (Essex, Harwich): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty if he is aware that at Walton-on-the-Naze, Essex, in case of a ship in distress or of a wreck, written information of such is sent from the coastguards' station to the coxswain of the National Lifeboat Institution's boat, and that no such information is supplied to the crew of the volunteer lifeboat, notwithstanding the fact that the messenger has to pass the houses of members of the volunteer crew, and whether, in view of the services rendered by the Walton lifeboat, the Board of Admiralty will give instructions that the same information is supplied to the volunteer lifeboat crew, and in the same manner, and at the same time.

*Mr. EDMUND ROBERTSON: Instructions will be issued to the coastguard to give information to both coxswains in the same manner.

Naval Policy.

*Mr. BOWLES (Lambeth, Norwood: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty a Question of which I have given him private notice, viz., Is he prepared, with the sanction of the Chairman of Committee, to enter into an arrangement whereby a general discussion may be taken on the Navy and on naval policy on Vote 8, or some other Vote?

*MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: I have no power to enter into any special arrangement, but I may remind the hon. Member that Vote 8 and Vote 12 will afford full opportunity for the discussion of naval policy, and those Votes will be submitted at a convenient time.

Militia Training.

COLONEL KENYON-SLANEY (Shropshire, Newport): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether the Army Council is satisfied that Militia recruits can be satisfactorily trained generally, and particularly in musketry, during the winter months.

I beg also to ask the Secretary of State for War if the scheme for allowing Militia recruits to enlist for their six months training at any time convenient to themselves has been approved by the commanding officers of Militia regiments; and how the scheme can be carried out consistently with the regular training of the complete battalions.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. HALDANE, Haddington): If the hon. and gallant Member will kindly refer to the full reply which I gave to Questions put on this subject on the 1st March,† he will find such information as I am at present able to give him on the points raised in his two questions. The scheme is purely experimental, and until it has been given a fair trial it is impossible to say whether it will be thoroughly satisfactory.

Army Officers' Pay.

*MR. VERNEY (Buckinghamshire, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether any and what changes have been made in the pay of officers in the Army during recent years, and when these changes were made.

MR. HALDANE: My hon. friend is presumably referring to regimental officers. Since 1881, when there were a few unimportant changes, there has been no alteration in the pay with the exception of the extra one shilling a day to the senior major as second in command, which was granted in 1887. It must be remembered that officers have received pecuniary benefit in recent years in respect of provision of furniture for quarters and messes, public horses, and grants of money in aid of mess and band expenses.

Seamen's and Soldiers' False Characters Bill.

*COLONEL LEGGE (St. George's, Hanover Square): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether it is proposed to re-introduce the Seamen's and Soldiers' False Characters Bill during the present session of Parliament.

MR. HALDANE: It is too early in the session to say whether an opportunity will arise for the re-introduction of the Seamen's and Soldiers' False Characters Bill of last session.

St. George's Barracks Recruiting Establishment.

*COLONEL LEGGE: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether any steps are being taken for the transfer of the Recruiting Establishment from St. George's Barracks, London, to a more desirable locality.

MR. HALDANE: This question is receiving very careful consideration, but I am not in a position to make any statement on the subject at the present moment.

Cavalry Barracks.

MR. ROSE (Cambridgeshire, Newmarket): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether, as a result of the inquiries made last year by the War Office of various district councils, with reference to securing suitable sites for the erection of cavalry barracks within their area, it is proposed to take any further steps in the matter.

MR. HALDANE: The question of the erection of any further barracks necessarily forms part of the general question of the future organisation of the Army, and, as I have already stated, I am not at present in a position to arrive at a decision on the general military policy.

Sir W. Butler's Trip to South Africa.

SIR SAMUEL SCOTT (Marylebone, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether Sir W. Butler has been sent out by the Government to South Africa on a mission, giving him large powers of local inquiry; and, if so, whether he can give the House any information as to the nature of that mission.

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† See (4) *Debates*, clii. 1289–90.

MR. HALDANE: Nothing is known in the War Office of the reasons for the departure of Sir William Butler to South Africa. He has not gone on any mission connected with the War Department.

Soldiers in South African Prisons.

MR. JOYCE (Limerick): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he can say how many men convicted of offences while serving as soldiers are now in civil prisons in South Africa; can he also give the names of such men imprisoned in Pretoria, with the nature of the offences, the sentence pronounced against them, the date on which they were convicted, also the conduct of those men while in prison; and whether their cases will be looked into with a view to mitigation of their punishment.

*THE UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. CHURCHILL, Manchester, N.W.): I am not able to give this information, but I will endeavour to obtain it from South Africa. No adequate reason for interfering with the ordinary procedure in such cases has been brought to my notice.

MR. JOYCE: When shall I put the Question again?

*MR. CHURCHILL: I propose to ask for the information by despatch, in view of the heavy cost of telegraphing.

Native Labour Limitations in South Africa.

*MR. ASHLEY (Lancashire, Blackpool): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies if it is proposed to extend to Natal and the Cape Colony limitations in respect of the conditions of native labour, similar to those to be imposed on the Transvaal and Orange River Colony.

I beg also to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies if he will lay upon the Table a copy of the limitations proposed in the Transvaal and Orange River Colony in respect of the control of those Colonies over the conditions of native labour.

*MR. CHURCHILL: In reply to this and the other Question of the hon. Member, I have to state that limitations in regard to the conditions of native labour are not under consideration at present.

Land Settlement in South Africa.

*SIR JOHN DICKSON-POYNDER (Wiltshire, Chippenham): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies what steps have been taken since the annexation of the Orange Free State and the Transvaal in 1900, with a view to British colonisation in those territories; whether any surveys have been made to ascertain what lands are available for settlers from the United Kingdom; what roads or other facilities of access and development are required; what methods of sub-division and tenure are best calculated to promote the establishment of an agricultural and pastoral population; and whether the Government will forthwith consider means by which these parts of the Empire may be most speedily and effectively colonised upon the same principles that have been applied with conspicuous success in other dependencies of the Crown.

*MR. CHURCHILL: I regret to say that it is impossible within the limits of a Question to answer the hon. Member's queries in detail. The last reports on the subject of land settlement which have been published to Parliament will be found in Cd. 2,482 and Cd. 3,563, and I shall be happy to send the later reports for the year ended 30th June, 1903, to the hon. Member for his perusal. Up to 30th June, 1905, about £2,200,000 had been expended on land settlement in the Transvaal and Orange River Colony out of the guaranteed loan. The amount of land acquired in the Orange River Colony is over 1,000,000 acres, at a cost of £850,000, and about 700 heads of families have been settled under the Settlers' Ordinance; nearly 1,000,000 acres have been purchased at a cost of about £500,000. The hon. Member will therefore see that the matter has engaged the serious and benevolent attention of the administration of the two Colonies, but the result has not so far been as satisfactory as could have been desired. Settlers require considerable capital, and there have been several bad seasons recently.

*Sir JOHN DICKSON-POYNDER: Has a survey ever been instituted for the Transvaal, and a return of the ownerships obtained?

*Mr. CHURCHILL: I should like notice of that Question.

Native Disturbances in Natal.

Sir GILBERT PARKER (Gravesend): May I ask the Under-Secretary for the Colonies if the Government have any fresh information with respect to the native rising in Natal? Can he say what prospects there are of an early pacification?

*Mr. CHURCHILL: The information which has been received by the Secretary of State has been practically to the same effect as that which has appeared in the newspapers. The last telegram, dated March 5th, reported the capture of the chief Gobizembe and the surrender of four chiefs, several headmen, and about 300 natives, and stated that the officer commanding hoped to complete the sweeping operations successfully.

Suggested Standing Committee for India.

Dr. RUTHERFORD (Middlesex, Brentford): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether he will consider the wisdom of appointing a Standing Committee of the House in order to form a link between India and the Members of this House.

The SECRETARY of STATE for INDIA (Mr. John Morley, Montrose Burghs): As at present advised, I can see no sufficient reason for making, in respect of Indian affairs, an exceptional arrangement, which is unknown in any other Department of His Majesty's Government.

Police and the Public in Eastern Bengal.

Mr. C. J. O'DONNELL (Newington, Walworth): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India if his attention has been drawn to the petition of J. L. Nundy, a merchant's clerk, supported by four other persons, three being Brahmins, to the commissioner of police, Calcutta, in which he states that when returning from his office on the 31st January, near the Bowbazar police station, he saw a number of constables, some in uniform and some in undress, abruptly come out of the station and beat the passers-by indiscriminately with belts, batons, and staves, and that he was knocked down insensible and received scalp wounds; whether he has any official information showing that this action of the police was due to some students, coming from a meeting of protest against partition, singing a national but not seditious song, called "Bande Materam," or "Hail to our Motherland"; and whether forcible repression of public meetings has been reported from many towns and villages in Eastern Bengal.

Mr. JOHN MORLEY: No information has reached me as to the statements contained in the Question, but I will see that the attention of the Government of India is drawn to them. As regards the last paragraph of the Question, the Government of India are awaiting a full report on the subject from the Government of Eastern Bengal and Assam.

Inspection of Telegrams.

Mr. VINCENT KENNEDY (Cavan, W.): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether the addressee of a telegram has a right to inspect the original; and, if so, whether there is any published rule on the point, or is it in the discretion of the Post Office authorities absolutely to grant or refuse such a request.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL (Mr. Sydney Buxton, Tower Hamlets, Poplar): Telegrams are preserved by the Post Office for a period of three months. During this time the telegrams are as a rule open to inspection by either the sender or the addressee, but there might be special circumstances under which the Postmaster-General would not consider himself bound to produce the original except under the order of a competent Court. The published regulation on the subject will be found on page 85 of the Post Office Guide.

Hours of Labour of Signalmen and Shunters.

Mr. BELL (Derby): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade if he will call for a Return of the number of instances on which eight-hours signalmen and shunters have worked ten and more hours, and ten-hours signalmen and shunters have worked twelve and more hours per day on the railways of the United Kingdom during 1905.

THE SECRETARY TO THE BOARD OF TRADE (MR. KEARLEY, Devonport): My right hon. friend is making inquiry to ascertain whether the information desired can be obtained.

Goole Railway Fatality.

MR. BELL: I beg to ask the President to the Board of Trade if he has yet received a Report from the officer who held the inquiry into the cause of the accidents to Porter Sellers and Fireman Day at Goole, Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway, on 28th December 1905; and can he state the ages of the two men and the hours they had been on duty at the time of their accidents.

MR. KEARLEY: An inquiry was held into the accident that occurred to Porter Sellers, and Fireman Day, who was injured at the same time, attended the inquiry. The Report has been received, and will be published in due course. Sellers, who stated that he was twenty years of age, had at the time of the accident been on duty for sixteen hours ten minutes, and the Board of Trade are in communication with the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway Company on the subject of the hours worked by goods porters at Goole. I have no knowledge of Day's precise age, but in the notice rendered by the company of his accident, he is stated to be over eighteen years old, and to have been on duty eight hours thirty-five minutes at the time of the mishap.

MR. BELL: Will the hon. Gentleman obtain a return from the company of the number of hours worked by these men in the three months ending December, 1905?

MR. KEARLEY: I will make inquiry and see if the information can be obtained.

German Tariffs on Bread Stuffs.

MR. RENDALL (Gloucestershire, Thornbury): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether under the new German tariff the duties on bread stuffs have been raised approximately from 35s. to 70s. per ton for the general tariff, and to 50s. for the conventional tariff; what percentage of duty is now levied on the principal bread stuffs in Germany; whether the price of such bread stuffs in Germany is greater than their price in England; and, if so, by how much; and, on the assumption that such duties are paid by the consumer, how much out of every 1s. paid in Germany for bread will, under the new tariff, be paid by the consumer for bread, and how much for duty.

MR. KEARLEY: The German import duties on wheat and rye were 35s. 7d. per ton under the former tariff; under the new general tariff they are 76s. 2d. and 71s. 1d. per ton, and under the conventional tariff 55s. 10d. and 50s. 10d. per ton respectively. The new conventional rates represent 39 per cent. and 43 per cent. respectively of the value of imported wheat and rye as shown in the German Import Returns for 1905. The price of wheat in Germany is higher than in the United Kingdom. The average market price for wheat in Berlin was 38s. 1d. per quarter in 1905. In the United Kingdom in the same year British wheat averaged 29s. 9d. per quarter, and imported wheat 31s. 0d. per quarter. Thus in 1905 the Berlin price exceeded that of imported wheat in the United Kingdom by 7s. 1d. per quarter (or 33s. 1d. per ton) and that of British-grown wheat by 8s. 4d. per quarter (or 38s. 11d. per ton). With the above data the hon. Member must form his own judgment as to the proportion of the price of bread which would be attributable to the duty.

Shirley Village Community for Poor Law Children.

MR. MACLEAN (Bath): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board if his attention has been drawn to a report made at a meeting of the Bermondsey Board of Guardians on the 18th January last, showing that the average cost of educating and maintaining the Poor Law children of Bermondsey in the village community, recently erected at Shirley at a cost of £320 per bed for 560 children, was during 1904 £1 11s. 1d. per child per week; and that in January, 1906, the community was costing the ratepayers £625 per week, or £1 1s. 9d. per child per week for 588 children; and whether the Local Government Board will take measure to check such expenditure by boards of guardians, seeing that it keeps the childrenas a class apart, and isolates them from the educative activities and interests of everyday life.

THE SECRETARY TO THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. RUNCIMAN, Dewsbury): I have not seen the report referred to, but I am aware of the high cost of maintenance in the Shirley schools, and I am in communication with the guardians on the subject. I will not lose sight of the matter.

Inland Revenue—Supervisors' Promotion.

MR. MEEHAN (Queen's County, Leix): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether in view of the rule that before a supervisor of Inland Revenue is promoted to the first class, his books must be examined and passed, he will say if the supervisor promoted over so many of his seniors was appointed before his books were examined; if he will give the date of the Board's minute giving special promotion to this official, also the date of the report on his books, and what explanation is offered if the former date precedes the latter; whether the Chairman and Board of Inland Revenue accept responsibility for this promotion, involving as it does the supersession of a hundred officials.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. MCKENNA, Monmouthshire, N.): The books of the supervisor in question were examined in the usual way and were found to be extremely satisfactory. The report on them was dated the 18th January, and the letters announcing his promotion were issued the same day. The board's minute making the selection was dated the 15th January, but effect was not given to it until the report on the books had been completed. The Chairman and the Board of Inland Revenue accept full responsibility for the promotion.

Stratford District Inland Revenue Supervisors' Promotion.

MR. MEEHAN: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury if it was with the knowledge and sanction of the Chairman and Board of Inland Revenue that the regulations were departed from in the case of the supervisor of Inland Revenue who was promoted from a lower to a higher class recently over more than one hundred of his seniors; and will he explain why, when this officer was first appointed to a district at Salisbury, he did not proceed there according to rule, but was allowed to remain at the chief office until a vacancy had been created at Stratford, to which, on the recommendation of the chief inspector, he was appointed.

MR. MCKENNA: The circumstances referred to in this Question took place in December, 1903, and were as follows:—After the assignment of the supervisor in question to the Salisbury district, it was found that it would be a more advantageous arrangement to appoint him to the new district in Stratford, and this was accordingly done—of course with the knowledge and sanction of the Board of Inland Revenue.

National Pension List.

MR. BOTTOMLEY (Hackney, S.): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he will state the approximate annual sum at present paid out of public funds for pensions and annuities in respect of the Navy, Army, and Civil Services, including the Judiciary.

MR. MCKENNA: The provision for pension and retirement gratuities, either voted or charged on the Consolidated Fund, was for the year 1905–6, in round figures.

	£
(i) Navy . .	2,423,000
(ii) Army . .	3,531,000
(iii) Civil Service (including Judiciary).	1,720,000
Total	7,674,000

This does not include the sums voted for pensions for the Dublin metropolitan police and for the Royal Irish constabulary. These were £32,000 and £379,000 respectively.

MR. BOTTOMLEY: Having regard to the fact that a sum approximating to £10,000,000 per annum is now paid out of public funds in respect of pensions to officials who have had good salaries, will the Government consider the possibility of providing old-age pensions for the aged and deserving poor?

[No Answer was returned.].

MR. KEIR HARDIE (Merthyr Tydvil): Do the Army pensions include those to the rank and file, or does the amount given refer only to officers' pensions?

MR. McKENNA: It includes all pensions.

Leadless Glaze Ware for Government Departments.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean): I beg to ask the First Commissioner of Works whether the use of leadless glaze ware is continued to be specified in contracts for china and earthenware by, or undertaken by other Departments on the advice of, the Office of Works; and whether the advice of the Office of Works in this matter is still asked by the Admiralty, the War Office, the India Office, and other Departments, or whether Questions should be put separately to them, and to the Post Office in respect of the purchase of insulators; whether he has any reason to suppose that there is combination on the part of many manufacturers or dealers not to supply articles made with leadless glaze except at special prices, higher than those originally set upon such articles when the policy of preference to leadless glaze was originally adopted by the Office of Works, the Admiralty, and other Public Departments.

*THE FIRST COMMISSIONER OF WORKS (Mr. HARCOURT, Lancashire, Rossendale): Amended special rules under the Factory and Workshop Acts, for the manufacture and decoration of earthenware and china, have been issued by the Home Office in the form established after arbitration by the awards of the umpire, Lord James of Hereford. These rules allow the use of lead glaze if the amount of soluble lead does not exceed five per cent. Experience having shown that strict adherence to the policy of using leadless glaze rendered it extremely difficult to obtain competitive tenders and considerably enhanced expenditure, the Office of Works has recently followed the example of the Home Office in accepting lead-glazed articles in accordance with the above rules. The advice of the Office of Works has not been sought lately by the other Departments mentioned; and I am unable to answer for them as to supplies under their control. I have no evidence of such a combination as is referred to by my right hon. friend; but if he has any information which he is willing to give me I shall gladly receive and, if necessary, act upon it.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE: Are any steps taken to test at the Government offices set apart for the purpose any of the articles supplied from time to time in order to see that the five per cent. is not exceeded?

*MR. HARCOURT: I believe that tests are made, but how frequently I am not able at this moment to say.

Meals.

Education (Provision of Children) Bill.

DR. MACNAMARA (Camberwell, N.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education when he proposes to move for the appointment of a Select Committee further to consider the Education (Provision of Meals) Bill, read a second time on Friday last.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION (Mr. BIRRELL, Bristol, N.): This matter is in the hands of the proper authorities, and the Committee, it is expected, will be moved for to-morrow or the next day.

West of Scotland Fisheries.

*MR. LAMONT (Buteshire): I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland whether, in view of the inadequate representation of the West of Scotland on the Scottish Fishery Board, and in view of the dissatisfaction prevailing with regard to the inaction of the Board in the present crisis, he will exercise the powers conferred upon him under The Sea Fisheries Regulation (Scotland) Act, 1895, Clause 6, Section (1), and create a Fishery District Committee for the Firth of Clyde.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR SCOTLAND (Mr. SINCLAIR, Forfarshire): The Secretary for Scotland can only move in this matter on the application of a local authority. No such application has yet reached me.

MR. ALEXANDER CROSS (Glasgow, Camlachie): What local authorities can move in the matter?

*MR. SINCLAIR: The authorities appointed by statute.

Capital Expenditure for Scottish Education.

MR. COCHRANE (Ayrshire, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland whether the sum of £210,000, which in September last the Scottish Education Department intimated to the governing bodies of technical institution in Scotland had been carried to a suspense account, so as to be available for capital expenditure in connection with educational work, is still available for that purpose; has the Treasury appropriated any unexpended balance of any sum allocated to Scottish education; and, if so, what steps, if any, does the Secretary for Scotland intend to take to recover for educational purposes in Scotland the sums so appropriated.

*MR. SINCLAIR: The Treasury has consented to a revote of the sum of £100,000 in the next financial year, the balance of the whole sum being placed on the Estimates in the next few years as may be required.

Scottish Education—Equivalent Grants for Technical Instruction.

MR. CROMBIE (Kincardineshire): I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland when he intends to introduce a Bill for Scotch Education, and how the equivalent grants for aiding technical instruction, amounting to some £211,000, are to be dealt with in the meantime.

*MR. SINCLAIR: The question of what legislation may be necessary for the better organisation of education in Scotland is under consideration; but it is not probable that a Bill dealing with the subject will be introduced during the present session. The sum revoted for next year will be distributed in accordance with the provisions of a Minute to be laid before Parliament.

English Trawlers in Scottish Waters.

*MR. ASHLEY: I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland what is the point of law awaiting decision by the Courts which prevents steps being taken to remove the disability under which English trawlers suffer when fishing off the coast of Scotland, as compared with trawlers flying a foreign flag.

*MR. SINCLAIR: British trawlers are prohibited from fishing in certain waters by Act and by-law, and the question pending in appeal before the High Court of Justiciary relates to the jurisdiction of the Scottish Courts over trawlers other than British.

*MR. ASHLEY: When is a decision likely to be come to?

*MR. SINCLAIR: That I cannot say.

Irish Tenants-at-Will.

MR. GINNELL (Westmeath, N.): I beg to ask Mr. Attorney-General for Ireland if, in view of the fact that future tenants are tenants-at-will, liable to eviction without cause by twelve months notice, and are excluded from the Land Courts except with the consent of the landlord, and that they are the only considerable class of tenants now so excluded, and that many of them have been in occupation without physical interruption for more than a quarter of a century, and that the legislature has never expressly enacted the creation of a permanent class of this kind without security or redress, His Majesty's Government will find some remedy for the position of future tenants.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. CHERRY, Liverpool, Exchange): The hon. Member has not quite correctly stated the legal position of future tenants under the Irish Land Acts. They cannot be truly described as mere tenants-at-will, inasmuch as, though their tenancies may be determined by notice to quit, they are, if evicted without cause, entitled to compensation for both disturbance and improvements. As a matter of fact, I believe that very few of them have been dispossessed except for non-payment of rent, and many of them have purchased their holdings under the Land Purchase Acts. Whether it would be possible or desirable to extend their rights by legislation is a matter which I could not very well discuss within the limits of an Answer.

Mr. FLAVIN (Kerry, N.): Will the Government introduce some legislation on the matter?

Mr. CHERRY: I have answered that part of the Question.

Irish Tennants' Improvements.

Mr. GINNELL: I beg to ask Mr. Attorney-General for Ireland whether his attention has been called to the practice of the Courts empowered to fix judicial rents in Ireland to presume every improvement to have been made by the landlord, unless the tenant furnishes legal evidence of the improvement having been made by himself or his predecessor; and whether, in view of those provisions, Section 5 of the Land Act of 1870, amended by Section 1 (10) of The Land Law Act, 1896, which say that all improvements are to be deemed the tenant's until the contrary has been proved, His Majesty's Government proposes to take any steps, by legislation or otherwise, to enforce these statutory provisions.

Mr. CHERRY: I cannot agree with the hon. Member that it is the practice of the Land Courts to presume every improvement to have been made by the landlord until the contrary is proved. I am informed by the Land Commissioners that, so far as they are aware, the Assistant Commissioners loyally observe the provisions of the statutes dealing with the presumption as to improvements and the decisions of the Superior Courts on the matter, which are numerous. His Majesty's Government does not propose to take any steps to enforce these statutory provisions, inasmuch as a right of appeal already exists in the event of a sub-Commission making a decision which is alleged to be erroneous.

Challenging of Irish Jurors.

Mr. LONSDALE (Armagh, Mid.): I beg to ask Mr. Attorney-General for Ireland whether he will lay upon the Table a copy of the revised instructions which he has issued with respect to challenging jurors in Ireland; and whether he can explain the reason for the issue of these instructions.

Mr. CHERRY: I beg to refer the hon. Member to the reply which I gave yesterday to a similar Question addressed to me by the hon. Member for North Down.†

Mr. T. L. CORBETT (Down, N.): Did not the right hon. Gentleman promise his constituents at the late general election that such instructions——

*Mr. SPEAKER: Order, Order. That does not arise out of the Question on the Paper.

Irish Land Purchase—Mineral Rights.

Mr. SHEEHY (Meath, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether, under the Land Act of 1903, the mineral rights of purchased estates are vested in the Estates Commissioners; and whether the Estates Commissioners have power to work, sell, or lease, such mineral rights in any farm; and, if not, will he introduce a short Bill giving power to the Commissioners to sell or lease these rights, with a view to the development of such mines as may be found to exist in Ireland.

The CHIEF SECRETARY for IRELAND (Mr. Bryce, Aberdeen, S.): Pursuant to Section 13 (3) of the Irish Land Act, 1903, the rights to minerals in respect to lands purchased by the Land Commission must be reserved to the Land Commission, but such rights cannot be disposed of by the Commission until the manner of disposal is provided for by Parliament. The question of legislation on the subject is under consideration.

Land Prices and Rent Reductions.

Mr. MURPHY (Kerry, E): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he can state the average reductions on judicial and non-judicial rents fixed before and after the Land Act of 1903; and if he can also give the average number of years' purchase paid for land before and after the Act, inclusive and exclusive of the bonus.

Mr. BRYCE: Full particulars respecting the reductions in first and second term judicial rents are set out in the tables which appear in the appendices to the annual Reports of the Irish Land Commission. In these Reports, and also in the Report of the Estates Commissioners, will be found information as to the average number of years' purchase in cases where advances have been made under the Land Purchase Acts before and after the year 1903. The tables in the Reports do not include the bonus. It would be a very troublesome task to add the bonus to the tables, but the hon. Member can without difficulty calculate its amount in any case or group of cases.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cliii., 304.

Mr. KILBRIDE (Kildare, S.): Is it not the fact that the effect of the Land Act of 1903 has been to raise the standard of value by six years' purchase?

Mr. BRYCE: I should not think so, but I have no information before me to enable me to say definitely.

Irish Out-door Relief Regulations.

Mr. JOSEPH DEVLIN (Belfast, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that in Belfast and other parts of Ireland objection is taken by the League of the Blind to the system of placarding in public places, even at the street corners in which they reside, the names of those who are in receipt of outdoor relief, and also bringing those persons twice yearly before the Poor Law Board; and whether, as no such system exists in Great Britain, and the relief is paid in cash instead of kind, he will see his way to have the system in Ireland assimilated to that in England.

Mr. BRYCE: The Local Government Board are not aware of the objection mentioned in the Question. The practice referred to has been found to be a great safeguard against fraud, by enabling poor persons to see the amount which has been voted to them; and it also acts as a check to the giving of outdoor relief to persons who are not fit subjects for such relief. The Local Government Board have no information as to what the practice is in England, but experience has convinced them that this practice has not worked ill, and that it is desirable to have the lists of recipients of relief revised at least once in each half year.

Candclear Estate, County Galway.

Mr. DUFFY (Galway S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether any steps have been taken by the Estates Commissioners to confirm the arrangements made by the tenants on the Candclear property, Raeveagh, Clarenbridge, county Galway, and the agent, Mr. Talbot Crosbie, in respect to the Coolratty farm; and seeing that ten months have since elapsed without an opportunity having been given the tenants to effect such changes and improvements as are required, and in view of the urgency of the work, will he direct the Commissioners to proceed at once to the settlement of this property.

Mr. BRYCE: The Estates Commissioners are unable to identify the property referred to from the particulars given in the Question, but if the hon. Member will furnish me with the name of the owner of the estate, the Commissioners will make further search. The Commissioners are making all possible efforts to accelerate the despatch of business, but the quantity they have to deal with is very large.

Gort Untenanted Lands.

Mr. DUFFY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if the Estates Commissioners have received a copy of resolution passed by the Gort District Council at their meeting on the 17th ultimo, wherein they request the Commissioners, in the event of their purchasing any estate in the neighbourhood, to have regard to the distribution of such land to the requirements of the evicted tenants in Gort, tenants of uneconomic holdings, farmers' sons, and workers skilled and unskilled, in the district and to means provided by the Land Act of 1903 for satisfying these requirements without adding to the rates; and whether due weight will be given to the representation made by the council when they come to deal with the untenanted land in the vicinity of Gort.

Mr. BRYCE: The Estates Commissioners inform me that they have received the resolution referred to, and that, in the event of their acquiring untenanted land in the vicinity of Gort, the views of the district council will receive due consideration.

Administration of the Irish Land Act.

Mr. GINNELL (Westmeath, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the

Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, having regard to the fact recognised by Parliament in 1881, and subsequently, that the relation of landlord and tenant in Ireland precluded real freedom of contract between those parties with reference to rent, and similarly recognised by Parliament with reference to price in all the Purchase of Land Acts prior to that of 1903, and that on account of the said fact Parliament established authorities for fixing rents and controlling prices; and having regard to the immediate increase in prices of land consequent on the removal of the latter safeguard by the Act of 1903, and the ultimate risk to persons not parties to contracts under that Act, in the event of default by the purchasers, what practical measures His Majesty's Government propose to take against this risk.

*MR. BRYCE: Without expressing any opinion upon the validity of the argumentative portion of this Question, His Majesty's Government consider that the evidence before them including the experience acquired under former Land Purchase Acts, goes to show that the advances which are being made to purchasers under the Act of 1903 are adequately secured.

Untenanted Land Return.

MR. GINNELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will grant the Return on the Paper for To-morrow in the name of the Member for North Westmeath.†

*MR. BRYCE: The matter will be carefully considered. A Return of the nature referred to would involve considerable expense, and I cannot yet say how long it would take to prepare it. The hon. Member had better defer his Motion for some little time.

Bloomhill and Derrycarney Road, Birr.

MR. REDDY (King's County, Birr): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the new road, known as the Bloomhill and Derrycarney Road, in the Birr rural district, is delayed in completion, by reason of the fact that the auditor has threatened to surcharge the county council should they proceed with the work; and whether he will give instructions to that official, who proposes holding his audit in Tullamore on the 11th instant, to allow those works to proceeed, as they have been repeatedly approved by the district council of Birr and the King's County Council.

*MR. BRYCE: I am informed by the Local Government Board that it is not the fact that their auditor threatened to surcharge the county council for the cost of the road in question. He suggested, however, to the council the desirability of considering whether the road should not be constructed as a whole rather than that, as proposed, a small section of it should be made which would not be of general public benefit. The county council approved of the auditor's suggestion, and referred the matter back to the district council in order that they might formulate a fresh proposal. It is the duty of the auditor to determine the legality of payments which come before him, and the Local Government Board have no power to interfere except on appeal from his decision.

Constable Anderson—Royal Irish Constabulary.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland where is Constable Anderson, who was one of the three constables of the Royal Irish Constabulary who received an indemnity from the late Government at the secret investigation which preceded the dismissal of Sergeant Sheridan for procuring by perjury the conviction of innocent men for crimes perpetrated by himself, and who was allowed by the late Government to remain on at the depôt of the Royal Irish Constabulary and discharge the duties of a constable of the force, notwithstanding the fact of his being Sheridan's accomplice in the fabrication of perjured evidence and the perpetration of crime; and whether, if this man be not removed from the Royal Irish Constabulary, on what ground is he still retained in the force, and what are the safeguards of the public against him.

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† Untenanted and Non-residential Land (Ireland)—Return of Untenanted and Non-residential Land, exclusive of demesnes, in Ireland by counties, giving in relation to such land in each county; (1) the rural district; (2) the townland; (3) the area in statute acres; (4) the Poor Law valuation; and (5) the name and address of the owner or person receiving the profits of the said land.

Mr. BRYCE: I am informed that this constable is still serving at the Royal Irish Constabulary Depôt, that he is, as was stated in this House on July 21st, 1904†, employed solely on the "fatigue" staff and is not entrusted with any authority over recruits or other members of the force, and that he performs no public duty outside the depôt. I find that the reasons for retaining this man in the force were fully stated in this House by the right hon. Member for Dover on July 23rd, 1902‡, and on other occasions.

Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL: Is the right hon. Gentleman bound by the statement of the right hon. Member for Dover to retain in the force this moral contamination and to allow this fellow, who has been proved up to the very hilt to be a perjured felon, to wear the uniform of the Royal Irish Constabulary?

Mr. BRYCE: The hon. Member will recollect that this man was allowed to continue in the force upon a promise which appears to have been made to him at the time when he became King's evidence. The hon. Member will see that it is not easy to depart from a promise made by my predecessor.

Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL: The right hon. Gentleman is misinformed. He did not become King's evidence. He gave evidence at a private inquiry, and the result of that was a pledge which I say should not be kept, as it was a dishonourable pledge.

Mr. SLOAN (Belfast, S.): Has the right hon. Gentleman any reason to believe that the charges preferred against this constable are true?

Mr. BRYCE: I submit that that does not arise. This matter was very fully gone into several years ago.

Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL: Yes, by a coercion Government. If this impure felon is to be retained, will he at least be segregated from other constables?

Mr. T. L. CORBETT (Down S.): Was not this man entirely acquitted of the charge brought against him?

Mr. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford): He was never tried at all, and his guilt was admitted by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Dover.

*Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order! This is now becoming a controversy. Hon. Members are not confining themselves to asking Questions.

Game Licence Prosecution in County Galway.

Mr. DUFFY: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether he is aware that Mr. Harry Persse, of Woodville, Loughrea, county Galway, was found by the police on February 17th, 1906, carrying and using a gun, accompanied by a setter dog, in the pursuit of game on his farm at Woodville; will he say whether Mr. Persse had taken out an excise licence or was in possession of a game certificate; and, if not, in view of the fact that Mr. Persse holds the commission of the peace, and repeatedly adjudicated in cases of this nature at Loughrea petty sessions, what steps the excise authorities intend taking in the case.

Mr. McKENNA: The Board have ordered proceedings against Mr. Harry Persse for the offence referred to, and the matter will be left to the adjudication of the magistrates. Mr. Persse took out a gun licence after the detection.

Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL: Has the attention of the Lord Chancellor been called to this case?

Mr. McKENNA: I have no information on that point.

Irish Education Grants.

Mr. FLYNN (Cork, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether he is aware that the Estimates for the coming financial year show an increase in the amounts required for primary education in Great Britain of £645,000, and in Ireland of only £1,502; and, if so, whether, in view of the state of primary education in Ireland, and the complaints as to defective school buildings and remuneration of teachers, the Treasury will take steps to remedy the disparity between the amounts raised for the purposes of primary education in Great Britain and in Ireland.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cxxxviii., 780.

‡ See (4) *Debates*, cxi., 1073, *et seq.*

MR. McKENNA: The figures are not comparable, as the Estimates for England and Scotland include not only Elementary but Secondary Education, Science and Art Grants, Museums, Royal Colleges of Science and Art, etc. As regards the charge for elementary education in Great Britain a large proportion of the increase is due to the larger number of children in the schools, a consideration which does not apply to Ireland in the same degree.

MR. FLYNN: But do not the figures show that England will receive from the public purse in the coming financial year 7s. 7d. per head of population while Ireland will get only 6s. 5d.? Will the Treasury favourably consider applications from Irish boards for increased grants in view of the defective nature of many school buildings and the low remuneration of the teachers?

MR. McKENNA: The larger increase in England is due to the fact that there are more children in the schools this year. The increase of children in Ireland is nothing like in the same degree.

MR. FLYNN: The hon. Gentleman entirely ignores the significance of my figures.

Irish Quit Rents.

MR. O'MARA (Kilkenny, S.): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer what is the average amount paid in Irish quit rents to the Commissioners of Woods and Forests during the last ten years; how these sums have been employed; and whether he can see his way to earmark these sums for Irish purposes.

MR. McKENNA: The average annual amount of quit rents paid to the Commissioners of Woods and Forests during the ten years ended 31st March, 1905, is £35,516. The money has been merged in the general income of the Land Revenues of the Crown, the surplus proceeds of which have been paid into the Exchequer each year in accordance with the provisions of the Crown Lands Acts. I do not see my way to proposing any change in the existing practice.

St. Patrick's Day Observance in Ireland.

MR. MACVEAGH (Down, S.): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether, in view of the fact that St. Patrick's Day is now by law a public holiday in Ireland, he will give directions that the post offices in Ireland will be closed on that day, as on Christmas Day and Good Friday.

MR. CHARLES CRAIG (Antrim, S.): May I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he is aware that in the North of Ireland St. Patrick's Day is not observed as a public holiday, that there is no demand for the closing of post offices, and that, as a matter of fact, the closing of public houses—of post offices I mean—would be a hardship upon the business men and traders of Belfast.

*MR. SPEAKER: That is a Question of which the hon. Member should give notice.

MR. FLAVIN: May I ask whether the hon. Member wants the public houses open on St. Patrick's Day in the interests of Dunville's whiskey?

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: St. Patrick's Day, being a bank holiday, the ordinary bank holiday arrangements apply generally to post offices throughout Ireland as being more suitable than the Christmas Day and Good Friday arrangements.

Caledon (Tyrone) Mail Service.

MR. LONSDALE: I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether he is aware that the inhabitants of Caledon, county Tyrone, have to post letters as early as 2.40 p.m. to catch the mails to England and Scotland the same night; and whether he will take into consideration the inconvenience which this entails upon business people, and arrange for a despatch of mails by the train leaving Tynan at 6.40 p.m. to proceed to England via Greenore, and to Scotland by way of Belfast and Ardrossan.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: Inquiry is being made on this subject, and I will communicate the result to the hon. Member in due course.

Local Expenditure—Suggested Government Statement on Budget Day.

MR. BOWLES: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether His Majesty's Government will consider the propriety of adopting an arrangement whereby, immediately after the

Chancellor of the Exchequer has made his Budget Statement of the National Expenditure and Debt for the year, the President of the Local Government Board would make a further statement of the expenditure and debt of local authorities for the same year.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN, Stirling Burghs): The relations between Imperial and local expenditure and revenue are under the consideration of the Government, and the suggestion made by the hon. Member will not be lost sight of.

Suggested Municipalisation of Canals.

MR. CLEMENT EDWARDS (Denbigh District): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether it is intended by the terms of the reference to require the Royal Commission on Canals and Inland Navigation to consider and report as to the advisability of canals and inland waterways being acquired and managed by the Government itself, or by county or municipal authorities alone or in combination, as well as by public trusts; and, if so, will he say what are the specific words in the reference which will enable the Commission to give effect to such intention.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: By the terms of reference the Commissioners are to report on the expediency of canals being made or acquired by public bodies or trusts, and I cannot doubt that under these words the Commission will receive evidence from those who favour acquisition and management by the Government and municipal authorities.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS (Kent, St. Augustine's): May I ask the First Lord of the Treasury with regard to the Order Paper to-day if, in view of the understanding that a whole sitting should be devoted to the Report stage of the Vote on Account, it is intended to proceed with it to-day seeing that it stands third in the Orders?

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: No, Sir, it will be taken one day next week.

NEW BILLS.

LICENSED PREMISES (IRELAND) (ST. PATRICK'S DAY) BILL.

"To enforce the closing of Licensed Premises on St. Patrick's Day in Ireland," presented by Mr. O'Mara; supported by Sir. Thomas Esmonde, Mr. William Redmond, Mr. Joyce, and Mr. Thomas O'Donnell; to be read a second time to-morrow, and to be printed. [Bill 75.]

JUVENILE SMOKING BILL.

"To provide for the prevention of Juvenile Smoking," presented by Dr. Macnamara; supported by Mr. Crooks, Major Seely, Dr. Shipman, Sir John Tuke, Mr. Cathcart Wason, Mr. George White, Mr. Shackleton, Mr. Alden, Mr. Henderson, and Mr. Lea; to be read a second time upon Thursday, 15th March, and to be printed. [Bill 76.]

CRUELTY TO ANIMALS BILL.

"To amend The Cruelty to Animals Act, 1876," presented by Mr. George Greenwood; supported by Colonel Lockwood, Mr. MacNeill, Mr. Channing, Mr. Crooks, Mr. Tomkinson, Mr. Maddison, and Mr. Lehmann; to be read a second time upon Friday, 16th March, and to be printed. [Bill 77.]

DOGS BILL.

"To consolidate and amend the enactments relating to injury to live stock by Dogs, and otherwise to amend the Law relating to Dogs," presented by Sir Edward Strachey; supported by Mr. Solicitor-General; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 78.]

FERTILISERS AND FEEDING STUFFS BILL.

"To amend the Law with respect to the sale of Agricultural Fertilisers and Feeding Stuffs," presented by Sir Edward Strachey; supported by Mr. Solicitor-General; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 79.]

OPEN SPACES BILL.

"To consolidate enactments relating to Open Spaces," presented by Sir Edward Strachey; supported by Mr. Solicitor-General; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 80.]

SUPPLY.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. EMMOTT (Oldham) in the Chair.]

NAVY (SUPPLEMENTARY) ESTIMATES, 1905-6.

1. Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £100, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1906, for additional Expenditure on the following Navy Services, viz. :—

	£
Vote 8. Shipbuilding, Repairs, Maintenance, &c. :—	
Section II. Matériel	100,000
Section III. Contract Work	100
Vote 10. Works, Buildings, and Repairs, &c.	100
Vote 11. Miscellaneous Effective Services	61,000
	161,200
Less Surpluses on other Votes	161,100
	£100"

*THE SECRETARY TO THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. EDMUND ROBERTSON, Dundee) said he should like to give a short explanation of this Vote. Last week in introducing the Navy Estimates for the coming year he stated that the reduction of £1,500,000 shown on the face of them was, in part, partly accounted for by the purchase of armour in the now expiring year. The amount of armour so required was something like £286,000. The Treasury, by virtue of powers given in every Appropriation Act, might sanction such expenditure on the part of the Admiralty, provided it could be met out of savings on other Votes as was the case in this instance; but, in the exercise of their discretion, they stipulated that, as a condition of their sanction being given, the new purchase of armour should be presented to the House in a Supplementary Estimate so that the sanction of Parliament could be given. The Estimates was now introduced for that purpose. At the same time the Treasury asked the Admiralty to include in the Supplementary Estimate various other minor items not actually provided for in the Estimates for the expiring year. The Estimates therefore included the armour to which he had referred, and one or two other things. The amount of armour was £286,000. The next item was £56,000 for hulls of ships, due to the purchase of a ship called the "Cyclops" during the now expiring financial year to take the place of the "Assistance" temporarily disabled. Then, under Vote 11, there was an extra sum of £17,000 for piloting and towing due to the piloting of a larger number of ships through the Suez Canal. A further item of £44,000 was for compensation for damage done to ships. That was mainly due to the running down of a ship called the "Afghanistan" by the "Caesar" in the course of the year. Those various items accounted for the amounts of the Supplementary Estimates except for £100, the balance shown between the new expenditure and the amount of savings. They might have taken the whole out of the Navy Estimates, but, in order to get the sanction of Treasury, they had to bring the matter before Parliament, and they therefore showed a balance of £100 to be provided for. He hoped he had made the matter clear.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN (Worcestershire, E.) said he understood that on the present occasion the Treasury had taken, under pressure, he fancied, of the Public Accounts Committee, something in the nature of a new departure. Parliament had hitherto been pleased to direct that the Treasury should exercise its discretion in regard to allowing money already voted to be diverted in certain instances to other cognate purposes. In the Army and Navy Votes the practice had been that the Secretary of State for War or the Board of Admiralty, with the sanction of the Treasury, might transfer a surplus on one Vote to another Vote. In the case of the Civil Service Estimates, the discretion of the Treasury to authorise the surplus on one Vote being used to meet the deficiency on another Vote was, owing to technical reasons, much more limited, but in principle he conceived that there was absolutely no difference. He would like to ask the Secretary to the Treasury what was the policy of the Treasury in this matter. On the present occasion the

Admiralty desired to take certain surpluses available on certain Votes and apply them to meet an excessive expenditure under other headings. He gathered that there was nothing in the nature of new work included in the Estimate. There was more armour for ships than contemplated, but there was no armour for ships not included in Vote 8 at all. There was included in the Vote one new purpose not hitherto sanctioned by Parliament, which might be said to raise a question which had never been before the House, and on which other Gentlemen would desire to question the Secretary to the Admiralty; but he was dealing with the matter from the point of view of finance and not of Admiralty policy. The main item, as he understood it, out of which the Estimate arose, was the provision of additional armour. The Admiralty did not ask that anything should be done of which the House had not previous cognizance or that the Admiralty had not contemplated; indeed, by what the House had already sanctioned they had encouraged the Admiralty to commit themselves to the expenditure. The only difference was that the delivery of the material had gone on faster than was contemplated, and therefore more money was required. He wanted to ask the Financial Secretary to the Admiralty whether it was the policy of the Treasury now that any divergence from Estimates, even where it was possible to meet the deficiency by a surplus on another Vote, should be sanctioned by the Treasury only subject to the presentation of a Supplementary Estimate to the House of Commons. He presumed, of course, that whatever answer was given to the question it would apply also to the Army Votes. If this were not so, then he would ask the Secretary to the Treasury what were the principles which the Treasury now laid down and what were the limits within which they would exercise their discretion without recourse to Supplementary Estimates? Then he would venture to ask him a further question. Were the principles which he applied to the Navy Estimates to be applied to the Civil Service Estimates? He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would appreciate that he was not raising the question captiously. He had been Financial Secretary himself; he had been on the Public Accounts Committee, and he had been Chancellor of the Exchequer, so that he had been for the ten years of his official life brought in contact with this class of questions from, he thought, every point of view; and he recognised that amongst unofficial Members of the House there was a natural tendency to be jealous of the discretion exercised by the Gentlemen who happened to sit on the Front Bench at any one time; but, if he might interpret the views of the hon. Gentlemen with whom he sat in the Public Accounts Committee with regard to these transferences, he thought they were not inspired by any narrow jealousy of the Government of the day and had no suspicion as to its motives or actions, but were animated by a belief that this transference from one Vote to another, from one subject to another, with sole appeal to the Treasury, led to careless finance, to extravagance, and to disregard of economy. The practice was open to abuse; he would not attempt to deny it; but he thought he knew enough of the Treasury to say that they, who were the especially-appointed guardians of economy and prudence in these matters, exercised an efficient and a sufficient control to prevent those abuses arising. He frequently stated to the Committee his firm opinions, as the result of long official experience, that anything which tended to interfere unduly with the discretion of the Treasury to sanction transference from one Vote to another, and from one subject to another, so far from serving the interests of economy, would lead to direct extravagance and waste. Anyone who had been Secretary to the Treasury or Chancellor of the Exchequer knew it was extremely difficult for a person holding that position to test effectively the real urgency of certain demands made upon him, especially for technical services. They had an illustration in the present correspondence, though he regretted that the letter on which the whole of that correspondence arose was not published. That letter would have shown at once the case the Admiralty put before the Treasury, whilst at the present time they were dependent upon the extracts in the Treasury's letter for what the Admiralty said. The Treasury said—

"In view of the statement in your letter that it would be detrimental to the public service if the expenditure in question were postponed until provision could be made by Parliament in the usual course, my Lords feel bound to assume that such a case has now arisen, and they accordingly give the required sanction."

It was very difficult for the Treasury, when a member of the Admiralty or the Army Council came to them and said, with the full measure of their responsibility as heads of one of the great defensive services, and with all the technical advice they had at their command, that some expenditure could not be postponed without detriment to the public service, to take upon themselves the responsibility of disputing the accuracy of the views of the experts or of rejecting the recommendations they made. He had known similar cases in his own experience. He had in mind a case where the Army Council pressed upon the Treasury in his day some expenditure for a hospital which he thought ought to be submitted to Parliament in the usual manner before it was incurred. He was confronted with the opinion, not merely of the Medical Officers of the Army, but of the Advisory Council of hospital and medical experts who helped the Army Council in these matters, and, when they stated that the Army Council and their advisers would not be responsible for the ill results if he did not exercise the discretion vested in him and sanction the expenditure, anticipating Parliamentary approval, he felt that he could not take the responsibility, in a matter affecting the life and death of our soldiers, of refusing what all the experts pressed upon him. He apologised if he made the illustration at too great a length, but the House would see the point he wished to make—the difficulty of the Treasury in setting their discretion in matters avowedly expert against the statements of those who had behind them an enormous force of expert opinion. There was, however, one thing the Treasury could do, and which, in his experience, was constantly done, and it was a real test of the importance attached to the demand made. The Treasury could say to the Secretary of State for War or to the Admiralty: "You have made out a case, but, as guardians of the public purse, we cannot afford to spend more than Parliament has sanctioned, and therefore, if this expenditure is of the urgency you allege, you must make a saving elsewhere. Then we will sanction the expenditure." In that way the power of the Treasury, both in the Military and Naval Vote and in the Civil Service Vote, did certainly control and check wasteful and extravagant expenditure. It was a real help to the Treasury to have this authority; but it should be remembered that the Estimates were not only framed very often three months in advance of the commencement of the fiscal year, but fifteen months before the close of that year, and that they very often applied to items scattered over all parts of the world. Information had to be collected and weighed at an even earlier period. Was there any man who could make a budget of his own expenditure fifteen months ahead and could exactly adhere to his heading of expenses throughout the whole twelve or fifteen months and not have to spend less on one item and more on another? Not a single Member could do it with regard to his own expenditure, which was more under his immediate control and in regard to which there was not anything like the difficulty there was in framing the Estimates. It was not reasonable, when they insisted upon Estimates being presented in detail as they were presented, to expect that they could be rigidly adhered to and that there would be no divergence in practice from what was anticipated fifteen months before the expenditure was incurred. Therefore, whilst putting his question to the Financial Secretary as to what principles the Treasury were now going to act upon, he wished to express the earnest hope that, in the interests of economy and of the Treasury, they would not lightly surrender the power to use the discretion which Parliament had conferred upon them, and to urge upon the Committee, whilst watching that discretion, if it liked, with jealous scrutiny, not unnecessarily to limit it or to destroy its usefulness.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. MCKENNA, Monmouthshire, N.) said that the right hon. Gentleman had stated quite accurately what the powers of the Treasury were with regard to the transference of surpluses from one Vote to another within either the Army or Navy Estimates or with regard to the transference from one subject to another subject in the same Vote in respect of Civil Service Estimates. He went on to ask him (Mr. McKenna) whether the present form of Supplementary Estimates indicated any intended change of policy on the part of the Treasury. He might say at once that the Treasury intended no change of policy. The Treasury received very great powers from the House, but, in the exercise of them, they conceived it their duty, whenever anything of an exceptional nature took place, that the attention of the House should be called to the fact. It would have been perfectly open to the Treasury to have allowed the Estimate to be submitted in a form which would not have informed the Committee, but, in the exercise of their statutory authority, they believed it to be their duty to inform the Committee of the very exceptional circumstances of the present case. He could assure the right hon. Gentleman that the Treasury would continue to exercise their power without conceiving it necessary to consult the Committee in every case where things were of small importance; but he trusted the Treasury would always refer back to the House of Commons in respect of all matters which were exceptional. That was the sole reason of the course adopted on the present occasion. The right hon. Gentleman had asked if there was any new Treasury rule, and as to the limits within which the Treasury would exercise their discretion in the future. It was, of course, impossible to define those limits, but the Treasury would be disposed always in the future to bring before the House of Commons any circumstances of an exceptional nature as in the present case. The same principle would apply to the Civil Service Estimates. He hoped he had satisfied the right Gentleman and relieved his anxiety.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean) said the desire of the late Chancellor of the Exchequer and of the Secretary to the Treasury was the same. They both desired that the House and Committee should be in full possession of all the facts, and that the intention of Parliament, as shown in the discussions in Committee of Supply at the beginning of the financial year, should not be changed without Parliament being informed. It was from the point of view of that object that he wished to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty where the main saving or main changes had taken place. The Secretary to the Admiralty had just alluded to exceptional savings, and at first sight one would be inclined to find them in that point in which he believed they had not, as a fact, been made, and as to which no statement had been made. He alluded to the four armoured cruisers in last year's programme. He believed one of them had been dropped, and it would seem at first sight that the large saving concerned that dropping of one of them, but, on examination, he believed that that was not the case. No statement had been made with regard to them, he thought, either by the late or by the present Board; neither in the new Memorandum on the Estimates nor in Lord Cawdor's Memorandum; but he understood that, although four armoured cruisers were in the programme of the present financial year and were in the contract Vote, in which there were changes both up and down, and although only three were in that of the new financial year, yet more money, as a fact, had been spent in the year on the three than was to have been spent on the four. As far as he could make out not one of these three had been actually laid down. The sums taken in the Estimates last year were, he thought, one £80,000, two sums of £20,000, and one £10,000, or one £80,000, one £20,000, and two sums of £10,000, and although one had been dropped out of the Estimates three sums of £80,000 had been taken. Thus a larger sum had been spent than was expected. He was not blaming the Admiralty for dropping one of the cruisers, but he thought a change in the programme ought not to be made without the House being informed of it. A great deal of progress seemed to have been made before the laying down of the cruisers, but the only permanent change, he thought, was the dropping of one of them. There had been savings, and he thought they ought to know on what they had been effected.

*MR. J. WARD (Stoke-on-Trent) asked if he should be in order in calling attention to the wages paid for certain classes of work, particularly in connection with the construction of docks, etc., on Vote 10 of the Supplementary Estimates.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON said that Vote 10 would come on later; these were only Supplementary Estimates.

MR. AUSTIN TAYLOR (Liverpool, East Toxteth) thought there was one point germane to the item on which he should like to ask a question of the Secretary to the Admiralty. He understood that the purchase of the armour had been owing to the unforeseen rapidity of construction of the vessels. If that was the case, it raised a point of greater inportance than any that had arisen during the debate, and that was the rapidity with which we could turn out vessels. In Lord Cawdor's Report specific allusion was made to the necessity for that policy, first, on the ground that by turning vessels out quickly we avoided the risk of their becoming prematurely obsolete; secondly, that by pushing forward a limited number of vessels into the fighting line, we obtained a greater efficiency than by having a larger number of vessels constructed more slowly; and, thirdly, that we got interest on our capital very much more quickly than if we delayed construction. If he might express his own opinion, he thought, from the point of view of the efficiency of our Fleet, that the rapid construction of our cruisers exceeded perhaps the importance of any other point raised in the course of the debate, and he thought, if the occasion was in the opinion of the Chairman fit, that the Secretary to the Admiralty might do what had not been done so far as he knew, either in this House or in another place, namely, give some indication as to how far that most important policy recommended in the Report of Lord Cawdor was being pursued by the Admiralty.

MR. J. WILLIAMS BENN (Devonport) said that for the first time the Committee was in possession of figures which set out the amount of money spent in the royal dockyards and the amount spent in private yards. He noticed that there was a balance in favour of the private yards for the years 1905-6 to the amount of £500,000. It seemed to him that in that significant fact they had the true explanation of those discharges which had caused such distress in dockyard centres. He was extremely anxious to secure from the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Admiralty some assurance that the policy in future would be to study the needs of the royal dockyards, and after that was done to give every consideration to the private yards. During the past few years the private yards had been very busy, but so far as the royal dockyards were concerned, they had a sad story to tell of the discharge of thousands of workmen. He wished to draw attention to the great reputation which the royal dockyards enjoyed for being able to turn out shipbuilding rapidly and efficiently. The Secretary to the Admiralty might remember a statement made by Lord George Hamilton in the last Parliament, in which he gave a very valuable testimonial to the efficiency of the royal dockyards. Perhaps the right hon. Gentleman would be able to make some statement which would tend to reassure the dockyard Members in this important matter. The royal dockyards could certainly turn out these ships as economically as private yards, and with equal rapidity. With regard to another item in the Vote—the clothing of the seamen—he wondered whether the right hon. Gentleman was aware that a great desire existed in the Navy for the reconsideration of the clothing, more particularly of those men who had to do with trades. The blue jacket costume was considered to be very inconvenient and unsatisfactory for the men who had, for instance, to do plumber's work on board ship. If the right hon. Gentleman made inquiry into this matter he would find a general desire that certain ratings should have a costume more suitable to the industry in which the men were engaged.

*MR. MORTON (Sutherland) said he was glad that the Treasury had insisted on this Vote being brought before the Committee, but it was very deceptive, because many people believed that it was only for the expenditure of £100, whereas they were asked to approve of an expenditure of nearly £500,000. The late Chancellor of the Exchequer had suggested that the Treasury were going to take a new departure and allow, by way of Supplementary Estimates, these matters to be brought before the Committee; but he gathered from the reply of the Financial Secretary to the Treasury that that was not to be so. He thought that last autumn there was a sort of undertaking that some attention should be paid to these matters. Every year those responsible for the Army and Navy Estimates asked for more money than they could expend on certain Votes, with the view of manipulating it for other purposes; and the result was that hundreds of thousands of pounds were spent without being sanctioned by the Committee of Supply at all. He wanted some assurance that in future the practice adopted on this Vote would be continued. When he was on the Public Accounts Committee—he noticed that he had been carefully left out of it in this Parliament, probably because he had made too many inquiries—he found on inquiry that money had been spent which had never come before the Committee of Supply at all. He hoped that in future these Votes would not be smuggled through, but that the Committee of Supply would have an opportunity of considering all expenditure. They all knew that the expenditure on the Navy was excessive and extravagant, and, if reforms were to be obtained for the people, savings must be made on the Navy and Army; and it was on Votes like that now under consideration that they ought to consider whether economy might be effected. He wanted an assurance from the Government as to what was going to happen in the future, and for that purpose he moved the reduction of the Vote by £50.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £50, be granted for the said Service."—(*Mr. Morton.*

*CAPTAIN HERVEY (Bury St. Edmunds) said that after the words which had fallen from the hon. Member for Sutherland it was only right that he should get up and say that he did not think the sums which were voted for the Navy were being wasted. He did not think it was right that what was necessary for the Army and Navy should, for the sake of the fad of a great many people, be taken away from the purpose for which it was originally required, viz., the Navy, and appropriated to some other purpose. He objected to any statement that we were spending more on the Navy than was necessary for its efficiency. Since this point of economy at the expense of efficiency—[MINISTERIAL cries of "No, no!"]—had been raised, it was necessary that they should consider one or two points in regard to the Supplementary Estimates. One was the Shipbuilding Vote. Experience gained in the last great naval war showed that efficiency depended on the size of battleships; and this question of size was nothing less than a question of money.

THE CHAIRMAN said that the hon. and gallant Member was entering on a large question of policy which did not arise on the Supplementary Estimates.

*CAPTAIN HERVEY said he bowed to the ruling of the Chairman; but he had drawn attention to the point which he wished to refer to, namely, that the efficiency of the Navy should not be made the sport of a fad.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN asked for what ships this armour was required?

*MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON said he hoped the Committee realised that practically all the expenditure the sanction of which was now asked for was due to proposals inherited by the present Government from their predecessors. The Government were only carrying into effect in this and in other matters the policy which had been accepted by the House before they came into office, as the history of the last financial year would show. The information he had about these Votes was not information for which he was personally responsible, but had been gathered at second hand from the permanent officials concerned in these matters. The right hon. Baronet the Member for Forest of Dean had spoken about four cruisers. He was informed that one of these cruisers had been dropped, and that there had been some delay in regard to the other three which were now being laid down. The ships for which the additional armour was " required were the "Dreadnought," the "Shannon," the "Defence" and the "Minotaur." The right hon. Baronet the Member for Forest of Dean asked where the amount saved upon the Estimates was coming from. It had accrued partly in consequence of the abandonment of the manœuvres last year, which had resulted in a saving. Under Vote 8, Section 2, there was a saving of about £200,000, a good part of which was expected to be used upon the manœuvres, but was not used because the manœuvres were abandoned. There was also a diminution of expenditure due to the earnings of contractors being less than had been expected. The amounts which contractors would earn in the course of a year were of a most speculative nature, and in the past year a very large decrease of expenditure had taken place upon that score. Another and a curious diminution was the saving upon the Victualling Vote, upon which there had been a saving of £81,100, due to the diminished issue of clothing because of a lesser demand for new clothes. The reason for this diminution was the prospective issue of the new kit, and the men did not want to buy things which were not up to date. Therefore there had been less demand for clothing, and there had been a saving, or rather a non-expenditure. His hon. friend the Member for East Toxteth had raised the very large question of the rapidity of construction, and all he had to say was that he would not purchase it at too dear a price. That was to say, he would not pay too much overtime. He thought that that should be avoided either in the royal dockyards or in the private dockyards of the country, in regard to either of which we feared no rival. It was not a good thing, in his judgment. Then his hon. friend the Member for Devonport had raised the still larger question, which hardly came within this Vote, of the distribution of orders between private and royal dockyards. To discuss that question fully would need a very long time, and all he could say was that the Government should do all in their power to keep the royal dockyards as fully and efficiently employed as possible. He could not say anything as to Devonport or as to any other dockyard at present, but by-and-by he should be able to explain his views upon them, though he could not now, he thought, be expected to go beyond the declaration he had made. The only other point that he recollected was one raised by his hon. friend the Member for Sutherland, which he had made the basis of a Motion for reduction. It was that money voted by the House should be devoted to the particular purpose for which it was voted. Nobody had spoken more strongly on that subject than he had himself. He understood that the Motion of his hon. friend was not a substantial one, but was intended to direct the attention of the House of Commons and the Government to the question, and the only assurance he had to give was that the Government would not, when they came to propose Estimates of their own, ask the House of Commons to grant more than they believed they could efficiently expend for the good of the country and its government. Moreover when they had got the consent of the House of Commons to that expenditure they would do their best to work closely to their Estimates

*Mr. ARTHUR LEE (Hampshire, Fareham) said the right hon. Gentleman had spoken in such a manner as to give the public the impression that the present Board of Admiralty had introduced a new and more desirable policy of keeping the Estimates down more closely to the actual expenditure. That was the declared policy of the late Board of Admiralty, specially referred to in the Cawdor Memorandum, and it was owing to the fact that the late Government had cut down the Estimates of the current year to the quick, and left no margin, that the necessity for these Supplementary Estimates had arisen. It was contemplated that this action of the late Board of Admiralty would often lead to the necessity for Supplementary Estimates such as these. But it was felt that it was a choice of two evils, and certainly the lesser evil was to put the Estimates as low as possible, because that would tend to greater economy in a big spending Department, as the officials would know that they had no margin to play with. This would, however, frequently result in the presentation of a Supplementary Estimate such as that under discussion. He thought credit for that ought to be given to the late Board and not be put forward as a new and improved policy which the new Government intended to introduce.

Mr. O. C. PHILIPPS (Pembroke and Haverfordwest) welcomed the statement of the Secretary to the Admiralty that he intended to keep the royal dockyards fully employed. He was also glad to see that more money was being spent upon the royal dockyards than was voted at the beginning of the year, but he would point out that the late Government had departed from the traditions of the Royal Navy in giving work in the first intance to private dockyards, and then considering the interests of the royal dockyards. The old tradition of the Navy, which had always been carried out by previous Governments—and he hoped would be carried out by this Government—was that the first to be given work were the royal dockyards, and then when they were fully employed it was the custom to give the remaining work to private contractors. He considered that it was a shame to pay off Government men who for years had been dependent upon the Government, and employ private firms.

*MR. ARTHUR LEE thought the hon. Gentlemen who had just addressed the Committee was more fortunate than some of them in hearing the assurance that the Secretary to the Admiralty would keep the royal dockyards fully employed.

*MR. NAPIER (Kent, Faversham) said he understood that the Secretary to the Admiralty preferred that the discussion on the comparative merits of Royal and private dockyards should be deferred till another time. He hoped the Committee would be afforded an opportunity at another time of fully discussing this question. During the year just expired, as the Secretary to the Admiralty must be aware, a very large number of employees had been discharged from the little dockyard in the constituency which he represented, namely, Sheerness. The number in that dockyard had been reduced one-third of what they were formerly. Every soul in Sheerness was dependent upon the Admiralty In the Secretary to the Admiralty they might be said to live, move, and have their being, and towards him they turned their eyes with singular anxiety. Dockyard Members were glad they were to have a day to discuss the matter, because they felt that their desires were co-extensive with the desires of those who wished to introduce greater economy into the Navy. Economy might be introduced without any sacrifice of efficiency if they gave larger employment to our expensive and costly dockyards. The royal dockyards were valuable national assets. The estimates were for one-third less men in the Sheerness dockyard, and, of course, if one-third less men were employed, the output would be one-third less than it was previously, though the expenditure on police and supervision would be exactly the same. He desired to elicit whether it was the intention of the Board to adhere to the policy as to repairs laid down by the previous Board. Whatever might be the respective merits and demerits of public and private dockyards in construction, he thought it had been definitely agreed—and he thought it was said by Mr. Pretyman, a member of the late Government—that the Government dockyard was more economical for repairs than the private dockyard. Mr. Pretyman in July of last year said that there was no doubt whatever that the cost of repairs in private yards had been considerably greater than in Government yards, and that they had therefore decided that, in so far as was possible, repairs should be carried out in Government yards. Unfortunately, Sheerness was not a dockyard in which it had lately been considered advisable to construct and build ships, but he hoped that policy might be altered. At all events, he was deeply interested in the matter, and Sheerness had suffered severely in consequence of the action of the Admiralty in discharging so many men from the dockyard. He did not refer to those discharges in pursuance of any pledges he gave during the election, as he had declined to refer to the discharges as affording any reason for votes being given against the late Government. He felt every confidence in pressing the claims of this constituency upon the earnest consideration of the Secretary to the Admiralty.

*MR. MADDISON (Burnley) said the right hon. Gentleman was surrounded by an active group of service and dockyard Members who professed themselves entirely moved by great national motives. He had three years experience in this House some time ago and he might say he thought he knew every one of those speeches. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would take a broader view than that which had been expressed by the dockyard Members. The hon. Member for Devonport had laid down that the first consideration ought to be given to the dockyards, and the second to the private yards, but he would suggest that the first consideration should be given to the nation.

MR. J. WILLIAMS BENN: It is the same thing.

* MR. MADDISON said he should hardly like to think that Devonport and the nation were the same thing—at any rate not from what he had seen of it. No doubt his hon. friend the Member for Devonport would go up in the estimation of his constituency for his last remark. He thought there was something to be said for unemployment generally. With regard to the derelict condition of Sheerness, the people there appeared to be dependent upon the right hon. Gentleman as a sort of Providence, but he hoped that they had a better Providence than the Secretary to the Admiralty. A dockyard discharge of workmen was a pathetic thing, and a man discharged from Armstrong's, or from a dockyard on the Clyde, or any other dockyard, was also a pathetic thing. Unemployment was unemployment everywhere, and if the Secretary to the Admiralty was to be approached on his sentimental side—it would be rather a difficult approach from what he knew of him—he hoped he would remember that it was as pathetic a thing for a Tyne or a Clyde workman to be out of work as for a dockyard workman. Therefore he asked the right hon. Gentleman to be very suspicious of the service Members. The country did not expect him merely to shuffle the Votes from one account to another, but substantially to reduce the total cost of the Navy.

* MR. MORTON said he objected to the remarks made by an hon. Member opposite who said that he desired to sacrifice efficiency to economy. He did not desire anything of the kind, and he would remind the Committee that Mr. Gladstone produced an efficient Navy with £18,000,000, and the Government were now proposing to spend £36,000,000 on the same service. He had listened with something like amazement to the statement that there had been economy by the late Government in regard to this Vote. He thought the late Government was the most wasteful and extravagant Administration that ever existed in this or any other country. He desired to thank the Secretary to the Admiralty for his assurance that the present Government would take the Committee into its confidence before money was spent. He begged leave to withdraw his Amendment.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

Original Question again proposed.

MR. JENKINS (Chatham) said he only rose in consequence of the reference made to the dockyard Members by the hon. Member for Burnley. He wished to point out that those who occupied the very invidious distinction of representing dockyard constituencies were there in the interests of the nation, and they were in a position to prove that from an economical point of view——

THE CHAIRMAN: I think the hon. Member is now trenching upon the Question which I have ruled out of order.

MR. JENKINS said he would reserve what he had to say until Vote 10 was reached.

Question put, and agreed to.

NAVY ESTIMATES, 1906-7.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £1,954,500, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the Expense of Works, Buildings, and Repairs, at Home and Abroad, including the cost of Superintendence, Purchase of Sites, Grants in Aid, and other Charges connected therewith, which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1907."

*MR. LAMBERT (Devonshire, South Molton) said he was asked two or three Questions the other day which he would take the earliest opportunity of answering on this Vote. The late Chancellor of the Exchequer asked him whether naval medical officers were allowed to walk hospitals. He was now able to assure him that they were, and since April 1st, 1905, forty of different ranks had done so. The hon. Member for Stoke-on-Trent asked him whether tenderers for Admiralty work would be required to pay the trades union rate of wages current in the district where the work was done. That was a very important Question which had been fully debated upon a Motion in this House, The Secretary to the Admiralty had made the statement with regard to the Admiralty policy in general that the wages required to be paid by Admiralty contractors would be those agreed upon between associations of employers and trades unions and obtaining in practice in the district in which the work was done. The decision as regarded other Admiralty work would be that given by the Financial Secretary to the Admiralty . He had been asked a Question about Rosyth. In regard to that he could give no further information than that which was conveyed by the Financial Secretary when he introduced the Navy Estimates. He had expressed the opinion of the Board of Admiralty with great clearness, and they must have further time to consider this most important matter before announcing their decision. As regarded the expenditure at Rosyth, in the 1905 Naval Works Loan Act there was £200,000 taken. The expenditure to 31st March, 1906, was expected to amount to £157,000, and there were further liabilities incurred of £6,000; therefore there was a balance of £37,000 with which to conduct those preliminary investigations which were essential at Rosyth. He had been asked a Question about the new lock at Portsmouth. That was a most considerable work and it was estimated to cost £940,000. The Board of Admiralty, with a due sense of responsibility in the matter, thought it essential that this new lock should be constructed. It was impossible for large ships such as the "Dreadnought" to enter the existing locks. All those who had knowledge of naval matters would know that to take a ship into a basin with both caissons open would be rather a serious matter should an accident occur, and the ships in the basin would run the risk of considerable damage. Therefore it was proposed by this new work to construct a lock 850 feet long, 110 feet wide and 33 feet at low water level. This would be a far more permanent work, he thought, than many of the works which had been included in past Loan Bills, and, to his mind, in putting this sum on the Estimates they would certainly hope to increase economical expenditure of public money more than they would by including the sum in loans. He wished to say two or three words upon the Vote generally, which had been greatly simplified since last year. Any hon. Member who now wished to refer to Portsmouth, Chatham, or Plymouth would be able to find exactly the service performed at any of the ports under the various heads in the Estimates. That, he thought, was a great advantage, and he would give his hon. friend the late Civil Lord the full credit for having suggested that that should be done. The total increase on Vote 10 was £49,300. There were two reasons for that. One was that the annuity to be paid on these various Loan Bills amounted to £1,094,309, which was an enormous sum for the Naval Estimates to be burdened with for many years to come; but still the money had been spent, and they had to pay interest on the money borrowed during the last ten years. There was an increase of £78,400 on the annuity, and there was also a sum of £93,900 on account of dredging transferred from Loan. Had it not been for these two items the total Estimate, instead of showing an increase of £49,300 would have shown a decrease of £123,097. The memorandum circulated this evening showing the progress made in the works at the various stations where money had been spent under loan would enable hon. Members to see exactly how the money had been spent and what progress had been made. He would give a short résumé of the financial liabilities that had been incurred during the past ten years by the various Loan Bills. By the Naval Works Loan Act of 1905, Parliament authorised borrowing to the extent of £27,593,820 out of a total estimated expenditure of £32,206,933, leaving £4,613,113 to be provided by future Acts. The actual expenditure upon these works to 31st March, 1905, was £19,817,091. The approximate estimated expenditure to 31st March, 1907, was £6,700,000. Therefore, it was estimated that by the end of the next financial year there would be expended out of the large sum authorised by Parliament, £26,517,091. If the works were executed and the estimated expenditure were incurred as foreshadowed by the Act of 1905, there would have to be spent after 31st March, 1907, a sum of £5,689,842. Now if all that expenditure was incurred they would have to look forward to a very large burden in the Naval Estimates in regard to the repayment of annuities and the interest on loans. The ultimate annuity in that case would be £1,500,000. This would be a very serious sum indeed for them to burden posterity with, and he only hoped posterity would be grateful for the favours that had been conferred upon it. At any rate it was hoped by exercising a strict supervision over these works to effect considerable economies.

*MR. ARTHUR LEE congratulated the Civil Lord on his accession to the post which he now held, and on the manner in which he had introduced the Vote to the House. He further congratulated him on the fact that the Vote was this year being introduced under much easier circumstances, because his experience went to show that if the late Government had been introducing it, the criticism would have been prolonged for many days. He did not think that that would be the case this year. He had no doubt that the Civil Lord had already discovered that it was easier to be a critic than to be an economist. In recent years it had been impressed on the late Government that the expenditure for naval works was excessive and often unnecessary, and that they were making unreasonable demands on the House of Commons. [Cheers.] He hoped hon. Gentlemen on the other side of the House who cheered that remark would take further opportunities of pressing their view on the new occupants of the Treasury Bench. He quite admitted that the right hon. Gentlemen now on the Treasury Bench had not yet had sufficient time to give the House a full test of their mettle, but judging from their professions in the past, he thought they might have effected a substantial reduction in this particular Vote this year, although he was perfectly certain that however anxious they might be to make such a reduction, they would find it exceedingly difficult, if not impossible, if due regard was had to the efficiency of the Naval Service. Therefore they found that the proposals which he had put forward in the past had been inevitably adopted by His Majesty's Government to-day, and it was only natural, therefore, that the Opposition should be willing to support those proposals. With regard to loan expenditure, the hon. Gentleman had said very fairly that there was a grave objection to the system of paying for naval works by constant borrowing. He had always held that view, but had also pointed out that the present Secretary to the Admiralty was the originator of the system, and the right hon. Gentleman was wont to reply that although he was the proud parent he was not prepared for such a rapid growth on the part of the child. He thought that during the debates last year both sides showed a disposition to bring this system of borrowing to an end at the earliest opportunity, and so far as he was concerned, if it were more convenient in view of the financial exigencies of the moment to provide the necessary money for these works out of the Naval Votes rather than by borrowing, he could see no objection whatever to that course. A great deal depended naturally upon borrowing advantageously, but after all the important point was not the method by which the money was to be raised but that the importance of the works should be recognised and the efficiency of the Navy not endangered by considerations of economy, because that was the very worst economy in the end. It was that short sighted system which had led to the original introduction of these Loan Bills. If Vote 10 had not been starved in the past there would have been no necessity for bringing in a system of Loan Bills at all, and he hoped that as soon as the Naval Works had been brought up to the level which the Navy required no further necessity for these Loan Bills would arise, and that in future they might have the whole of the expenditure shewn upon the Votes. He understood from the hon. Gentleman, although he did not perhaps state it in precise terms, that it was the policy of the Government in future to transfer many of these works from Loan to Votes The big item which at once came up in this connection was Rosyth. The total Estimate given to the House last year and included in the original draft of the Vote was £2,500,000. The House was then informed that this large item would be shewn in the Estimates of this year, but it was not so shown, and the explanation of the Government was that the present Board of Admiralty had found it necessary further to consider the matter. It was said that that was a full explanation, but he did not think so. The Government wished for further time to consider this project, but he wished to know whether they wished for that further time in order further to consider the design of the project, having regard to the increased dimensions of modern ships, or whether they wished further to consider the matter from the point or view of its strategic necessity. That was an important point, because it was strongly felt in some quarters of the House that the strategic necessity of this naval base was of urgent importance from the point of view that it would take ten years from the time the project was started before the works would be available. That was a long time to look ahead. It was difficult to say what our international relations would be by that time, although there was no reason to suppose they would be less satisfactory than they were now. But if this project was to be adopted it should be commenced as soon as possible, because we should not have the use of it for ten years. He hoped that point would be touched upon by the right hon. Gentleman when he replied later. Then the large item in connection with Portsmouth was merely shewn as "new lock, etc." That was not a very luminous description of a work for which the Committee were asked to vote £940,000, and no doubt they would be anxious to have some further information with regard to that item. The necessity for a new lock had been well established, but the proposal originally included other works of another description consequent upon the idea of the new lock. He wished to know in what position the new lock was to be placed, as at the time he left the Admiralty that was an open question. It was with the greatest satisfaction that he heard that this great scheme was not to be given up in spite of what right hon. and hon. Gentlemen had said about economy when they were in opposition. He also asked for information as to what had been the outcome of the proposal of the late Board of Admiralty to take over from the Colonial Government the Commercial Mole at Gibraltar, in order to give the Atlantic Fleet more extensive but necessary accommodation. He desired to know on what terms that Mole had been taken over and what would be our extra financial responsibility in consequence. The last point was with regard to the employment of Marines at Bermuda upon works of a purely bricks and mortar character. He thought that the whole of their pay, including that for this work, should not be charged to this Vote. The anomaly of purely regimental pay being charged to the Works Vote was one which he had attempted in the past to get rid of, and what he desired now was an assurance from the hon. Gentleman that he would take up this question and see that the Marines' pay was put on Vote 1, only the extra working pay being retained on Vote 10.

*MR. BELLAIRS (Lynn Regis) said he would like to know whether the amalgamation of the Works and Loans Department and the Works Department was completed, and if so whether it was working satisfactorily, whether the £1,500,000 a year, which the hon. Member had mentioned as being the interest we should have to pay on the various works, included what would have to be paid for Rosyth. When he looked down the list of the projects upon which the late Government had spent this money he could quite understand the objection of the Liberal Government to many of them, and their desire to abandon several items altogether. There was a very great objection to the amount incurred in Gibraltar, where the works were open to a bombardment from the coast of Spain. He had always failed to see the necessity for any Naval works at Gibraltar at all. At Malta nearly £1,000,000 had been spent on a breakwater, and the question was now beginning to be discussed as to whether that work had not spoilt the drainage of the harbour. The floating dock at Bermuda, which the Admiralty did not appear to have much use for, might, he suggested, be brought home to Rosyth, where it might be made of use. With regard to Wei-hai-wei the late Government, he believed, had a scheme cut and dried, but happily in that case the expenditure had been very small. He noticed that the cost with regard to Osborne College had been increased from £50,000, the original estimate, to £163,000. He agreed that the lock at Portsmouth was necessary, but he could not understand why only £10,000 was taken for it on the Estimates this year, when the estimated cost was £940,000. He pointed out that whilst it was now the custom of hon. Members opposite to talk of Rosyth's being necessary for strategical reasons, when that project was put before the House it was said its necessity arose owing to the congestion in Royal dockyards. This would be seen if hon. Members examined the terms of

Reference of the Commission which reported upon it. There was no question of strategy; they simply had to consider the question of congestion in the Royal dockyards, and they even went so far as to consider the question of increasing the personnel of the existing Royal dockyards. They considered the advisability of increasing the number of men in the existing yards, yet 6,776 men were dismissed from the Royal yards last year, which was equivalent to discharging the whole establishment at Chatham. He agreed with the hon. Member for Fareham that it would take at least ten years to erect Rosyth into a great Naval base. But he thought he would be borne out when he said there was very little prospect of there being any congestion in the Royal yards for many years to come.

He asserted that there was not the slightest prospective congestion in the existing dockyards. The dockyard Members were complaining of want of work a short time ago, and it was perfectly evident that with a programme of four armoured ships a year there was no prospect of congestion at Portsmouth, Plymouth, Sheerness, and Chatham. Writing of the Rosyth scheme at a time when the Press was asserting that it was a bad scheme, Lord Selborne, in a letter dated December 31st, 1904, to Mr. Maconochie said:—

> "Questions of policy must be influenced by financial as well as naval considerations."

He thought that was a point which it was necessary to rub well into the Committee. If the Admiralty could get economy without lack of efficiency he would support them, and he was perfectly certain they could get economy under Vote 10 when considering the question of Rosyth. He hoped they would remember that portion of Lord Selborne's letter in which he referred to financial as well as naval considerations. He had before him the *Dunfermline Press*, a paper published in the locality, in which there was reported a speech made in April, 1903, by Lord Elgin as Chairman of the Dunfermline District Committee of the County Council, when he occupied a position of less responsibility than he did now. In that speech the noble Lord said:—

> "When the naval base was fully developed there would be, as he understood it, that proportion of the men belonging to the Navy ('30,000 or 40,000 bluejackets') in connection with that base."

The Committee could understand from that statement what sort of dockyard was contemplated by the late Government. It was to be a dockyard on the same scale as that at Portsmouth. It showed the mad way in which they were prepared to plunge into bricks and mortar when the taxpayer had got what was called a hot fit.

Mr. ARTHUR LEE said the hon. Member was quite mistaken in supposing that the late Government proposed to build a dockyard at Rosyth the same as those at Portsmouth and Chatham. It was to be a small naval base which would cost £2,500,000.

*Mr. BELLAIRS said that the Secretary of State for the Colonies, a very level-headed man, who was chosen as chairman of the War Commission by the late Government, certainly went away from an interview with the Admiralty with the impression that a great dockyard was going to be built. Lord Elgin, in the same speech, proceeded to estimate the population which the Admiralty had led him to believe would be established by 1913, and for which the local authorities should at once lay down the necessary pipes for a water supply. He said he had had a conference the previous afternoon with the officials of the Admiralty and that they said that, in their opinion, anyone who was laying pipes for a water supply to this spot at the present moment would not be wise to lay pipes for a less population than 30,000 within twenty years. He hoped the Civil Lord would take these points into consideration. The Admiralty might appoint a small Advisory Committee to consider the special circumstances in regard to Rosyth.

*Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER (Croydon) said the speech of the hon. Member for King's Lynn would have been more appropriate ten years ago, when some of the matters to which he had referred were current questions. He had referred to the considerations which affected the Berthing Committee, which sat many years ago.

*Mr. BELLAIRS : In 1902.

*Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER said a great deal had happened since 1902, as he would show. The hon. Member told the Committee that he had come to the same conclusion with regard to Wei-hai-Wei as the Admiralty came to some time ago; he lamented the mad ways of the Admiralty and said, speaking as a member of the Naval profession, that they were wise enough to follow his view. With regard to one question which was touched upon, and which might still be considered a current question, he thought the hon. Member had not followed the subsequent stages of the Admiralty policy in regard to Rosyth. It was quite true that a Committee was appointed to deal with the question of congestion in the dockyards. What happened after the Committee had reported? The Admiralty grappled with the problem of berthing in a way which made it unnecessary to carry out the great berthing programme which was previously in contemplation. They effected an enormous diminution in the ships to be berthed in the dockyards. The problem which the Admiralty were now called upon to deal with—and so far as he knew they had not changed their minds about it—was the strategic problem in connection with the Continent of Europe. The Admiralty had merited the eulogy of this House for having dealt with that problem, and if the hon. Member would go to the west coast of Scotland he would see how they had dealt with it. They had taken the useless and obsolete ships out of the dockyards and put them in the Kyles of Bute, where the cost of their maintenance was little or nothing. The strategic position of Rosyth remained, and it would, he believed, be dealt with by the Board of Admiralty on Naval grounds alone. That was a far less expensive problem than the berthing project which was in contemplation when the plans for Rosyth were under consideration. He understood that under Vote 10 the general principle had been adopted that in connection with all the Naval Works the trade union rate of wages was to be paid to the workmen. He asked the Civil Lord what was to be done in cases where there was no trade union organisation. He asked the Question, not because he objected to the principle but because it had a very practical application. He remembered making a very careful inquiry into the rates paid in every shipbuilding yard throughout the country. He found then that a very large number, he believed a majority of the men in the skilled trades in the Admiralty dockyards were trade unionists, and that as a rule the wages paid to them were at the trade union rates. He understood that the same was the case with regard to similar classes of labour under Vote 10. But there were cases where considerable disadvantage arose from not following the exact prescription of the House of Commons' Resolution which was that the rate of wages current in the district should be paid. The Question he had asked had an important bearing on both sides of this matter. What happened in the Thames district? In that district the trade union rate of wages was higher than in any other part of the United Kingdom. A disadvantage from which the Thames shipbuilding yards suffered was that there was neither coal nor iron in the district. Some of the yards had been abandoned, and he understood that there were one or two others which would not be able to continue with the higher rates of wages. He wished to know whether central rates or trade union rates were to be fixed for the localities where no trade union now existed. Perhaps the hon. Member would tell the Committee also whether this change would or would not produce an excess in the Estimate under Vote 10. This was a very important matter, and they ought to know now, before proceeding further with the discussion, if there was to be any increment in the cost owing to the change.

*Mr. J. WARD (Stoke-on-Trent) said he wished to say a word or two on behalf of a body of men employed in the Government dockyards who were not included in the trade union rate of wages. They had had some difficulty in connection with the dock extension at Portsmouth a few years ago. A contract was given out by the Admiralty to make a dock, and after work was commenced it was discovered that the wages paid to the navvies were at least 1d. per hour under those paid in the locality. He approached the Admiralty with a complaint that the trade union rate of wages was not being paid, and the reply of the contractor was that there was no similar class of work being done in the district by which the rate of wages could be fixed. The Civil Lord of the Admiralty would see at once that many docks could not be excavated in one locality at the same time, and therefore the comparison of wages paid could only be made by taking the ordinary work of excavating for the local building trades. The Admiralty sided with the contractor, who completed the last portion of the Admiralty dock by paying to the excavators 1d. per hour under trade union rates. There should be some definite understanding as to what were trade union rates for navvies. He believed that it was proposed to spend a big sum of money in making docks at Rosyth. [Ironical MINISTERIAL Cheers.] Well, it was assumed that there might be money spent in that direction, and therefore it was necessary for him to take this opportunity of putting his case, to provide against that possibility being carried into effect. Rosyth was practically a wilderness at the present time. [AN. HON. MEMBER: And will remain so.] He was not so sure that he would not second the hon. Gentleman in making that statement; but the Government were surely going to place their views in regard to that Naval base before the House shortly. However, Rosyth was at the present time practically a wilderness, and supposing the Admiralty called for tenders for the construction of a dock there, they might feel that they had satisfied their conscience by saying that there was a clause in the contract providing that the trade union rate of wages was to be paid. But what possible means would there be of deciding what was the trade union rate of wages for excavating docks in the locality? Consequently, he wanted to know whether the Admiralty could not, outside London, fix something like a minimum rate of wages for this class of work which should be recognised by Government contractors. The wages paid for excavating work in London was 7d. per hour; and the average wage outside London for similar work was 6d. per hour. He was very sorry it was so low, because the work was most laborious and the service rendered by navvies to the community was most important. Could not the Admiralty say, in asking for tenders for this class of work, that the minimum wage should be 6d. per hour? He thought the representative of the Admiralty would admit that he was not asking for anything unreasonable. He hoped that more sympathy would be shown to the navvies whom he represented, and who, he admitted, were not thoroughly organised, in this application than was shown in the case of the Portsmouth dock contract. The men were a very deserving class and performed important functions to the State.

MR. CREMER (Shoreditch, Haggerston) said he understood from the statement of the right hon. the Secretary to the Admiralty that an opportunity would be given to discuss the whole Naval programme of the Government on another occasion, and therefore he did not now propose to criticise the policy which involved the enormous expenditure now being incurred for the Naval service of the country. But he could not allow this Vote to pass its final stage without registering an emphatic protest against that policy. The feeling of Members, both old and new, on the Ministerial side of the House was very strong on the subject. They had repeatedly said—

> "We have come here with pledges given to our constituents at the recent election that we would do our best to secure economy"—

and they were quite clear that if a Liberal Government came into office and remained in power, there would be very great retrenchment on the expenditure for the services. It was a source of deep regret to him that it had been left to an hon. Member on the other side to twit the Government of the day for not having redeemed the pledges made during the election. He wanted to deal with the Government as tenderly as possible, and not to say anything very severe; but it was quite time that some one should tell them of the feeling which existed in regard to this question. What had been done during the last sixteen or seventeen years? In the Queen's Speech in the session of 1889, when a Conservative Government was in office, there was presented a Naval Defence Bill, in which it proposed to expend £21,000,000 of the taxes of this country for the purpose of providing a strong Navy. On that occasion he moved an Amendment, the discussion of which occupied two days, and he divided the House upon it. Considerable feeling was shown in the lobby in regard to the matter and a large number of Members registered an emphatic protest against this shameful waste of the resources of the nation. He himself did not object to a powerful Navy.

The CHAIRMAN said that the hon Member was discussing the general question of the size of the Navy. This was Vote 10 for Works, and the hon. Member must confine his remarks to that Vote.

Mr. CREMER said that he tried in vain the other day, when the general question was under consideration, to raise this point; but if he was ruled out of order now he would reserve what he had to say until the proper moment arose. He wanted to take action to prevent the unnecessary waste of public money. He had never joined those who repeated the parrot cry of "We must have a strong Navy." But leaving that aspect of the question, he supposed that Members of the House, generally speaking, were appalled by the statement made the other day by the Secretary to the Admiralty that in seven years time we should be paying £2,000,000 more for the Navy than to-day. They had yet to learn whether they would be really compelled to carry out the obligations already incurred. He wanted to point out what was the attitude taken up in regard to the naval base at Rosyth. In the last Parliament, when it was proposed by the then Government to establish a naval base at Rosyth, the whole Liberal Party in the House took up an attitude of hostility to it. Some of them had learned with amazement that the policy of continuity in regard to Rosyth had been observed by the present Government. They had solemnly protested in the last Parliament that this project was absolutely unnecesssary, and he and many others had taken a conscientious view of the subject. They had expressed that view by their votes and some of them by their voices, feeble though they might have been. They had protested against such a waste of public money. Now they learned with astonishment that the present Government were going to continue the policy which they had condemned when in Opposition. He should be glad to be corrected if he were wrong, because he admitted that no clear statement had been made on behalf of the Admiralty and the Government, but the impression which prevailed on the Ministerial as well as upon the Opposition side of the House was that the Government proposed to complete this naval base at Rosyth, and it was against that that he and a considerable body of Members in the House wished to enter an emphatic protest. He thought, and he was sure that hundreds of other Members on the Ministerial side of the House thought with him, that they should have some promise or hope of a promise held out to them that the Admiralty would consider the question of whether they should continue to waste the resources of the nation in this way. Not only was this expenditure useless, but it was absolutely dangerous, because it had an irritating effect in Germany with which country it was to our interest to cultivate friendly relations. He thought that they were justified in asking the Government to state their opinion very clearly in regard to this wasteful and mischievous proposal. After wasting the resources of the country in naval armaments for twenty-one years and spending money upon what the Prime Minister in his speech at the Albert Hall called "provocative institutions" and leading other nations to do the same, he thought they were justified in the protest they had made, because after all this expenditure had been incurred we were in exactly the same position as we were twenty-one years ago.

Dr. AMBROSE (Mayo, W.) said he did not rise for the purpose of discussing in detail the work which had been carried on at Rosyth, but for the purpose of protesting against the enormous amount of money which was taken out of Ireland for the purposes of works of this kind. We were going to spend £2,500,000 on Rosyth, and he wanted to know what equivalent sum was going to be spent in Ireland upon similar works and what was the amount which was going to be taken out of Ireland as a contribution towards the works at Rosyth. The Government were going to spend £36,000 upon Haulbowline, and that was the return which Ireland got from taxation amounting to millions a year. In comparison with what was spent in other parts of the country it was in his view but the millionth part of a farthing in the way of return. The Admiralty were going to construct a naval base at Rosyth, but surely there was enough water round Ireland to relieve the congestion from which it was said the Navy suffered. It was to protest against this policy of the Government that he begged to reduce the Vote by £100.

Whereupon Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not ex-exceeding £1,954,400, be granted for the said Service."—(*Dr. Ambrose.*)

MR. SOARES said he merely rose to make a remark in reply to the hon. Member for Haggerston who said that the Liberal Party had steadily opposed the policy in regard to Rosyth of which they were now voting in favour. He was present at most of the debates in the last Parliament when this question was dealt with, and so far as he remembered what they did oppose was the enormous price, representing some fifty or sixty years purchase, which the late Government paid for the land at Rosyth. That they always protested against as an extravagant mode of expenditure, but they always left the policy of whether there was or was not to be a naval base at Rosyth to the Government, and he hoped that that policy would always be left to them.

MAJOR SEELY (Liverpool, Abercromby) said that he recollected that Ministerialists during the last Parliament did protest against these Estimates again and again because they considered they were bad financially, but they also protested for another reason, and that was that this great expenditure should be incurred by a vacillating Government which could not make up its mind whether Rosyth was to be a great naval base or a small naval base. When the proposal was brought forward by Mr. Pretyman he said that an officer was proceeding to Rosyth to draw up a comprehensive plan of what would be required for a great naval base on the scale of Portsmouth or Plymouth. That was in 1903, and the hon. Member for Fareham would say he did not share that view in 1904; he said it must not be supposed that the laying down of a first class naval dockyard could be settled in a few days or even in a few months. Later on, however, the scheme was modified in such a may as to justify them in saying that there had been vacillation. He thought therefore they were entitled to protest against right hon. and hon. Gentlemen opposite supposing that because they did not criticise these Estimates they did not continue to hold the views they did before. What they wanted was continuity of ideas and that was what they never could get from the late Government during the last few years. Against any vacillation of that sort they should again protest, but he would remind hon. Members of the Opposition that it did not lie in their mouths to call Ministerialists to account for any protest that they had made for the vacillation for which they were not responsible.

*MR. ARTHUR LEE (Hampshire, Fareham) said the hon. Gentleman who had just spoken had stumbled upon what the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War had that afternoon called a *nidus equinus*, or, in plain English, a mare's nest. He had quoted speeches made by the late Secretary to the Admiralty and also by himself with regard to Rosyth in order to show that he had taken up an inconsistent position that afternoon. Nothing of the sort had happened. It was quite true that according to the original suggestion made in the Berthing Committee's Report it was considered that it might be necessary, or would be necessary under conditions which no longer existed, that there should be a large increase of berthing accommodation for the Royal Navy, and consequently that there might have to be a large dockyard at Rosyth.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: What was to be the cost?

*MR. ARTHUR LEE said about £8,000,000 or £10,000,000, although no careful estimate was made, and could not have been made until the plans were further advanced. If hon. Gentlemen would do him the justice to look up his statement of last year, they would see that he said that they proposed to create at Rosyth a small self-contained naval base, but that in view of possibilities in the future they did not wish to hamper any future Board of Admiralty if they wished to extend that base should the necessities of the Navy require it. He also said that they, in the first place, had profited by past experience where dockyards had been originally laid out upon too small a scale, and it had been found impossible afterwards to extend them without great expense. He also said that they had therefore determined, in the interests of posterity, to lay out the design of the base in such a way as would give those who came after them an opportunity, if necessary, of using the site to the fullest possible extent. The plan which was laid before the House of Commons last year was merely for a small self-contained base, which they considered then, and still considered, was vitally necessary, but which could be extended at any time, without undue difficulty, if a larger base were required. They did not wish, in short, to prejudice the site, and make it impossible for posterity to increase the size of the dockyard if it was found necessary. He did not think his hon. friend had made out any case whatever as to inconsistency of his attitude.

*MR. MADDISON (Burnley,) said the point on which he desired to address the Civil Lord had reference to the very wise decision of the Admiralty Board, preceded by the equally wise decision of the Post Office, to recognise what were called trade union rates of wages. The contention of the right hon. Gentleman opposite, who had no great sympathy with this kind of thing, seemed to him to assume that there was some difficulty in the way of recognising trade union rates. But those who were associated with the Trade Union group in this House had always felt very keenly on this matter, and the hon. Member who had to reply would not be embarrassed, because by the trade union rate of wages it was not meant that any particular union rate should be paid, but that a rate should be paid according to some agreement arrived at between the employers and employed in a particular district. It had been asked how that principle could be applied to contracts in districts where there was no trade union rate and which were desert places before the docks were placed there. A particular district where a dock was about to be made would correspond with other districts where docks had previously been made and where the rate of wages had been fixed. It might be advisable for the Admiralty and all the great Departments to call to their aid, not for the purpose of deciding, but for the purpose of helping them to come to a conclusion, an advisory committee of large employers and trades union representatives, who in two or three hours would come to a conclusion as to what should be the standard rate of wages in any new district. These exceptional questions were constantly cropping up and were always dealt with. He hoped therefore the Department would not be deterred from carrying into effect their intention to carry out the spirit and the letter of the arrangement the right hon. Gentleman had recently come to. There was not the slightest difficulty in the matter. It must be clearly understood that whether it was the men who worked the guns or the men who made the ships or repaired them it was not the intention of those who desired retrenchment in these Estimates to effect that retrenchment out of the wages of the men employed. A good deal had been said as to the way in which Liberal Members had opposed the item with respect to Rosyth. One basis of their criticism was no doubt the manner in which the Estimate was presented and another was the vacillation of the late Government which knew the mind of every body but itself, but more than that there was a feeling on the Liberal side of the House that the time had come when there should be reduced Estimates for both the Army and the Navy. The country had watched with the greatest interest and delight the statesmanlike foreign policy of Lord Lansdowne in his endeavours to bring about more amicable relations with foreign Powers. He himself was a simple man, and he could not help thinking that any attempt to bring about better relations with foreign countries should be connected with these War Budgets, and if the Liberal leaders did not so connect them they were either impotent or hypocrites.

THE CHAIRMAN: Order, Order; the hon. Member is trenching on the wider question. His remarks must be confined to Vote 10.

*MR. MADDISON said he bowed to the Ruling of the Chair, and desired to say in conclusion that it should be clearly understood that they did not wish to reduce the efficiency of anything needed for the defence of the country. Hon. Members opposite must recognise that he and those with him had just as much interest in the defence of the country as any Member of the House. This was a matter of large policy, and he hoped the right hon. Gentleman would put into operation at the earliest possible moment the sound principles he had so eloquently advocated when in opposition.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER (Croydon) said he thought that he individually took even a wider view than the hon. Member for Burnley, because he was concerned about that large section of the community, —the taxpayer; and what he ventured to ask the Civil Lord was what would be the initial effect of this change. The hon. Member had not made that quite clear. What was the procedure to be adopted? In the printing trade and kindred occupations the London rate of wages regulated the whole of the wages throughout the country, not, it was true, on the London scale, but the provincial rules of wages always bore some relation to the London scale, and when the London scale was put up the provincial rates of wages all over the country went up also. What he wished to know was, supposing Admiralty works were undertaken at a place where no work of a similar kind had ever been done before or was likely to be done in the future, whether the rate of wages was to be governed by the London rate or by a new rate which was to be created, and if by a new rate, by whom was that to be decided? Was the Admiralty to have anything to do with the making of the rate; was it to be left to the nearest trade union in the neighbourhood; or was it to be governed by the London rate? Those were the Questions he wished to put to the hon. Gentleman, and also what would be the net effect of this change on the portion of the Admiralty Administration which came in Vote 10?

*MR. WEDGWOOD (Newcastle-under-Lyme) called attention to the item for the pay of civil engineers working for the Admiralty. He said that our private shipyards did not require civil engineers to work for them, and there were no such officials at Elswick or other private establishments. They were not absolutely essential to the Admiralty, because there was a body called the Royal corps of naval constructors, an admirably trained set of men, who were quite able to deal with dockyard work. He had a very interesting recollection of a year spent by himself in that corps at Portsmouth dockyard, and, so far as he could remember, the Royal corps of naval constructors and the civil engineering branch of the Admiralty spent a good deal of time in trying to do each other's work over again. So long as there were great works going on a certain number of civil engineers must be employed, though he had seen £200,000 spent at Elswick without their assistance. Now that they were no longer going to borrow money for large works, surely this body of engineers might be reduced or a period set to their services. He did not want to see the country saddled for many years to come with this payment of £55,000 a year for these gentlemen, who were not absolutely essential to shipbuilding in this or any other country except, of course, when big works were projected; and when big works were carried out, it was then necesssry to go outside the Government engineers to the great private consulting firms. Another disadvantage in having this partially unnecessary corps in the Admiralty service was that the tendency was naturally for them to create work for themselves. The Committee wanted to see this unnecessary construction and extension checked, and if possible put an end to. £940,000 was put down for a new lock, and that might be very necessary, but could they trust the civil engineers absolutely to cut down the work to a minimum? He thought not. He considered the corps of civil engineers an excellent body of men, but as they were economising they might as well reduce the number of these gentlemen.

*CAPTAIN HERVEY said he did not wish after the words of the last speaker to push up the expenditure on new works, but with reference to the expenditure on the new lock at Portsmouth it had been necessary, he believed, to make it, in consequence of the increase in the size of our ships. They had in addition to consider whether the locks that we had at our other dockyards were equal to taking the ships which were being built. It was no good our building big ships if only in one or two of our dockyards we could get the ships into the repairing docks. Each must be considered, so that it might be able to take the biggest ship afloat at any given time. He would like to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether the question had been thought out, and whether there was a scheme on foot by means of which it would be possible at Chatham, Devonport, Portsmouth, as well as Malta and Gibraltar, to take such ships as the "Dreadnought" without any increase in the present size of the locks at these yards. If not, what proposal was there to meet the situation when that ship was ready for commission, and might have to be docked? He also desired to ask what arrangements there were at Gibraltar for the ammunition reserves of the fleets that we had in being. The fleets that we had now based on Gibraltar were very much larger than those which had been based on Gibraltar in the past. Some years ago he was gunnery lieutenant of a flagship in the Mediterranean, and he had a good deal to do with this question there. At that time a vast amount of ammunition was stored at Malta, and a large amount was also stored at Gibraltar, partly for the Mediterranean fleet and partly for the Channel squadron. Now there was another fleet being based upon Gibraltar, and he should like to know whether the ammunition arrangements for the reserves had been thought out so that there were sufficient magazines and shell spaces at Gibraltar to supply the necessary ammunition for the increased fleets. It was necessary that this matter should be carefully considered before the fleets were based upon any one of these particular ports. He remembered when he was carrying out the duty of supervising the reserves, a question was put to the senior ordnance store officer at Malta with reference to the actual stores in reserve there. The question put was how long would it take to get the actual reserves of ammunition that were supposed to be in store at Malta into such a condition that they would be able to be put immediately on board the ships of the squadron. There was then only 25 per cent. of the ammunition that was supposed to be there, and the answer that they got from the senior ordnance store officer was that it would take fifteen months. That showed how necessary it was that this matter should be carefully considered, if possible before making any increase in the number of ships that were based on a given port. At any rate it ought to be done as soon as possible after having determined on an increase. Had such arrangements, he would ask, been made to increase the storage of ammunition and shell supply at Gibraltar in accordance with the increased number of ships based there?

*MR. LAMBERT said that with regard to the last Question he could inform the hon. and gallant Gentleman that according to the Memorandum circulated this morning there was an Estimate in the Act of 1905 of £1,325,000 for magazine accommodation, of which a considerable portion had been spent up to 31st March this year, and he could give figures by reference as to what had been spent at Gibraltar. He could assure the hon. and gallant Gentleman that his suggestion would receive attention, and if he cared to put a Question the Admiralty would be glad to answer him. With regard to the general question of economy in naval expenditure, it was not his function to enter into that, the Financial Secretary to the Admiralty being the Minister to announce great changes in Admiralty policy. It would be also out of order on this Vote. He had been asked one or two questions as to what the financial effect would be of giving trade union rates of wages to those employed by the Admiralty. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Croydon asked how they were going to find out the trade union rate of wages where no trade union existed. Of course that must be a special circumstance and must be the object of special consideration. A Resolution known as the "Fair Wages Resolution" had more than once been affirmed by this House, and it was the desire of the Government, taking account of all the circumstances of such several cases, to act up to the spirit of that Resolution. Precisely the same consideration must be taken into account in assuming what was the rate of wages that were current in the district as would have to be taken into account with regard to the wages paid where no trade union existed. With regard to the question of navvies, he believed the hon. Member for Burnley suggested a joint board. All he could say at the present moment was that that should be most sympathetically considered by the officials of the Admiralty with a view of giving fair treatment to those employed on this arduous Admiralty work.

*Mr. MADDISON asked whether this sympathetic consideration applied to the general question of wages?

*Mr. LAMBERT said certainly it would be considered by the Admiralty. The Admiralty would be most willing to do what they could in the matter. The right hon. Member for Croydon had spoken from the taxpayer's point of view. He thought the taxpayer had given this House a mandate to be model employers, and he hoped that all that trade unionists wanted was to get a fair day's wage for a fair day's work. He was sure that that was a principle of which every Member of the House would approve, namely, that the Admiralty should pay their employees the rate of wages current in the district where the work was to be performed. The question of Rosyth had come into the debate very considerably. He did not profess to be at all competent to pronounce an opinion upon the strategic advantages of Rosyth; that was a question for the naval experts of the Admiralty. He would point out, however, as showing the necessity for deliberation on the part of the present Board of Admiralty that the late Civil Lord had mentioned that this scheme originally was to cost something like £8,000,000.

*Mr. ARTHUR LEE: No, £2,500,000.

*Mr. LAMBERT said he thought the statement was that there was some idea of establishing a naval base at Rosyth, which would cost something like £10,000,000.

*Mr. ARTHUR LEE said the hon. Member had misunderstood him. What he said was that if a large first-class dockyard had been decided upon the cost would have been £10,000,000.

*Mr. LAMBERT said the hon. Member admitted that there had been consideration of such a scheme, at any rate, and this proved the wisdom of the policy of the present Board of Admiralty. That sum was afterwards brought down to £2,500,000, a very considerable difference. That fact in itself would be a justification for the deliberation being pursued by the Admiralty in further considering this matter of Rosyth, which was purely a question of naval needs. If it was found necessary for the Fleet, and for the naval defence of the Empire, then Rosyth would be proceeded with, and if it was not necessary it would not be proceeded with. The hon. Member for King's Lynn asked whether the £1,500,000 a year paid for the loan included the £2,500,000 for Rosyth. By the Naval Works Act of 1905 £200,000 was provided for Rosyth, and that would be in the £1,500,000 for the annual interest upon loans. At the present time the charge upon loans was £1,094,000, but that would go on increasing, and if the expenditure foreshadowed by the Act of 1905 was carried out, and the whole of the money expended, in 1910 the annual interest to be borne by the

Navy Estimates would be £1,500,000 a year. With regard to the amalgamation of the Loan and the Works Departments, that had already been satisfactorily effected, and the change would come into operation on the 1st of April. The late Civil Lord had asked a question about the employment of marines at Bermuda. That was a very intricate subject, at which the hon Member had been hammering for a long time, and all he had to say was that he would endeavour to follow his example. With reference to the commercial mole at Gibraltar, that was part of the Admiralty scheme of extension at Gibraltar, which also included improving the harbour and other things, and it was thought by the Civil Government that they would like to have a commercial mole as well. That was agreed upon, and the civil authorities had one placed at their disposal, but owing to the redistribution of the Fleet that commercial mole was required by the Admiralty, and therefore the money paid by the colony of Gibraltar to the Admiralty had to be refunded in order that the Admiralty might be the absolute possessors of the mole. They were actually in possession at the present time. With regard to the position of the lock at Portsmouth it was difficult to describe, but if any hon. Member was interested in it he should be pleased to show him the plan. In regard to the Question put by the hon. Member for West Mayo, they all sympathised with the desire of Irish Members to get as much money as possible spent in Ireland. He liked to see as much money spent in Devonshire as possible, and that was only a natural desire. They did not, for a moment, wish to deprive Ireland of any work which could be executed in that country with advantage to the Navy and the naval needs of the Empire, but the Admiralty had to consider where its repairing could best be done most cheaply and where the dockyard could be most conveniently placed. The hon. Member for West Mayo would have no more sympathetic friend than himself in giving Ireland as large an amount of work as possible, and he assured him that they did not wish to deprive Ireland of any money which could be economically spent there, but they must look to profitably employing money voted for the general efficiency of the Navy. With regard to enlisting Irish boys into the Navy, he should like to see a larger number of Irish sailors, because Irishmen had proved themselves so brave in the British Army. The action of the Admiralty in this matter was not due to any idea of depriving Ireland of her fair share of this money, but simply to keep up the efficiency of the Navy.

Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER asked if the hon. Member could tell them whether there would be any, and if so, what, extra expenditure, as the result of the change in regard to the payment of wages.

* Mr. LAMBERT said that had not been calculated. The principle they were going upon was that of paying a fair day's wage for a fair day's work, calculated after due regard to all the circumstances of employment in the district.

Lord R. CECIL (Marylebone, E.) said that in answer to the hon. Member for Burnley the Admiralty had promised something in the nature of sympathetic consideration to the proposal to appoint an Advisory Committee to determine the rate of wages to be paid.

* Mr. MADDISON: I did not say to determine, but to report. The determination, of course, would rest with the Admiralty.

Lord R. CECIL asked whether, if such a Committee was appointed to report, the Government would undertake to give the House an opportunity of discussing that Report before they adopted it. This question was of a far-reaching nature, and the House ought to have a full opportunity of discussing it before it was adopted. He would also like some information with reference to the provision of dock accommodation at other ports besides Portsmouth.

Mr. EDMUND ROBERTSON was understood to say that at the present moment vessels of the "Dreadnought" type could be docked at Portsmouth and Gibraltar and at Keyham and Malta in a short time. He had promised sympathetic consideration to what was suggested by the hon. Member for Burnley, and that consideration would be given. He thought it was quite reasonable that the House should have an opportunity of discussing the matter if any change of the wages was decided upon.

Mr. CHARLES DEVLIN (Galway) said that the hon. Member in the course of his reply had stated that the Admiralty would be very glad to spend all the money they could in Ireland. Judging from that reply, one would imagine that a good deal of money was being spent in Ireland by the Admiralty. He thought he was correct in saying that as a matter of fact not one pound would be spent in Ireland this year on Admiralty works, though that country would have to contribute far beyond her share and even beyond her power for the maintenance of the Navy. Of course, they were accustomed to hear year after year expressions of sympathy in this matter, but when the representatives of Ireland made an appeal to be relieved of some of the taxation they never got any sympathy. He was delighted to hear from the Civil Lord that the representations of the trade unions were so well received by him and by the Department for which he spoke. The cause of labour had always received from the representatives of Ireland very earnest and sympathetic support. The statement of the Civil Lord that the workers in connection with the Government dockyards would be well treated and paid would receive their support. They were glad to hear that economies were to be effected. The economies could not begin too soon or be carried to too great an extent. In other days it was represented to them that it was necessary that this country should have a great Navy to defend its commerce, but Members from Ireland represented a country whose commerce had been diminished for many years. That was very much owing to the influence of this country in Ireland. Having no trade on the seas to defend, Ireland had no benefit whatever to draw from this expenditure on the Admiralty. No valid reason could be given why some of the expenditure should not be made in Ireland. In the west of Ireland there were places where magnificent harbours could be constructed, and strategic reasons could be adduced for such expenditure. The west coast of Ireland was closer to America than any other portion of these islands. Esquimault and Halifax were to be taken over by the Canadian authorities, and consequently the expenditure ought to be diminished to a very large extent, and also the taxation to which they had been subjected in this country. He complained of the magnitude of the contribution which Ireland made towards meeting this expenditure while deriving absolutely no benefit from it.

The CHAIRMAN: I am afraid the hon. Member cannot raise the question of the financial relations now.

Mr. CHARLES DEVLIN said he was aware he could not raise the question of the financial relations at present. He did not even mention the question of the financial relations. His complaint was that heavy expenditure was incurred for the Navy, that Ireland was obliged to contribute towards the cost in too great a proportion, and that that country which was overburdened with taxation got no benefit from this expenditure.

Mr. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.) said that Ireland had to pay a substantial portion of the amount expended under this Vote, and it was the duty of the Irish representatives to enter a protest. He asked hon. Gentlemen opposite to remember that the position of the Irish representatives in regard to the Navy was altogether different from that of the British representatives. He had never expressed surprise at the declarations of hon. Gentlemen on both sides of the House, for it was necessary for Great Britain to maintain a large and efficient Navy. He believed that most people would recognise that the Army, to say the least of it, was a weak reed to rely upon. Though the expenditure on the Navy was colossal, the people of this country had the consolation that a certain amount of the money expended was circulated amongst their own working classes in connection with the dockyards, harbours, ports, and workshops.

But the people of Ireland had to bear their full share of the taxation without getting a single penny of it returned. In connection with this particular Vote, money was expended at Gibraltar, the Cape of Good Hope, Hong-Kong, and Malta. But his constituents would say, "We don't care very much about Hong-Kong; we do not wish Hong-Kong any ill whatever; we hope things may go well with them; this may be very important for England, but it is for Great Britain to pay for these things herself and not come to the people of Ireland for large contributions towards services from which they get so little return." This was not the Vote on which to raise the question of the attitude of the great self-governing portions of the Empire toward the Navy, but he would take another opportunity for doing so. He considered it a perfectly monstrous thing that the British and Irish taxpayers should be asked to bear the whole of the expense of the Navy, and that the enormous communities in different parts of the world—great, wealthy, and progressive—should not be asked to pay anything at all. That was a large question which would have to be considered. Everybody was glad that this year there was a decrease in the Navy Estimates. Since he came to the House the Navy Estimates had considerably more than doubled, and whatever benefit the people of this country had derived the people of Ireland had derived none. They hardly ever saw the Fleet; they were told there was a Fleet, but they found the greatest difficulty in getting a gunboat when required to prevent ships from coming in and interfering with the fishing industry of the poor people. The hon. Member for Galway represented one of the finest ports in Ireland, which did not figure in this Vote at all. He made this protest in no particularly unfriendly spirit. He believed that the present Government were alive to the gigantic proportions of the Naval Estimates, and that they would do something to reduce them, but there was no harm in giving the hon. Member a reminder now and again.

*CAPTAIN HERVEY said that the right hon. Gentleman had spoken about the arrangements for docking at Portsmouth, but he did not make mention of Chatham, which was the only big Naval port on the east coast. The centre of Naval activity at the present time was the North Sea, and under these circumstances it was more than ever necessary to be able to dock our biggest ships at Chatham, or it might be at Rosyth. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would give the Committee some more definite information.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON said he could not add anything to the Answer he had already given

MR. JOHN O'CONNOR (Kildare, N.) said he rose for the purpose of telling a story which he hoped would not be regarded as irrelevant to the question raised by his hon. friend. It related to an all-night sitting which occurred many years ago, when he spoke occasionally. The story was told by a highly respected Member who came from Gallant little Wales, and was a Whip of the Liberal Party. His name was Tom Ellis, and when that gentleman visited Cork, the boys chartered a steamer in order to take him a trip down the river, and they pointed out to him Haulbowline. The name appealed to the imaginative mind of Mr. Ellis, and he said he well remembered Haulbowline because it constantly occurred in the Estimates for the Navy—

> "Not long ago," said Mr. Ellis, "I left the House of Commons during one of these all-night sittings, when Mr. John O'Connor was talking about Haulbowline. Next morning, at seven o'clock,I was summoned back to the House, and when I arrived at half-past seven o'clock, there was John O'Connor still talking about Haulbowline."

He trusted the story was relevant.

*THE CHAIRMAN said he would be grateful if the hon. Member would be a little quicker in giving him the means of judging of the relevancy of his reference to Haulbowline.

MR. JOHN O'CONNOR said the relevancy would appear in a moment. Haulbowline was a base for Naval supplies. There was a dock there, commenced forty years ago, but still unfinished. And during all that time no vessel of any great dimension had ever entered it. When he asked long long ago what was being done for the dock at Haulbowline, he was told that there were no workshops. Some years after the workshops had been erected, he asked what was being done, and was informed that no tools had arrived; and afterwards Lord Charles Beresford stated that the dock was not big enough to hold any ship in the Navy. Cork harbour had always been regarded as a refuge for His Majesty's ships in time of war. Its motto was *Statio bene fide carinis.* They had been spending any quantity of money all during his natural life to fortify that harbour in order to make it a safe refuge for vessels in time of war, and yet the Admiralty had allowed this dock to remain absolutely useless for the purpose for which it was originally intended! He remembered many years ago, during the first reign of Earl Spencer as Viceroy of Ireland, that the noble Lord, as a splendid personality, came down to Cork and visited Queenstown, and said that he proposed to ask His Majesty's Government to build a dock at Queenstown. It was during Lord Spencer's Viceroyalty that a dock was commenced to be built. Successive Governments had been spending money for the purpose of building up a great Navy, which was an insurance for the commerce of England, but which was not an insurance for the commerce of Ireland, because England had taken good care that that country had none. At the same time, however, this money was being spent in a wasteful manner, and he had to point out to the Committee that the money which had been expended upon Cork harbour, from time immemorial, or at all events within living memory, had been wasted. It was in the interests of the Empire that they, the reluctant Members of that Empire, should point out that taxes should not be wasted in this manner. They had asked, although they had not been urgent, for the expenditure of larger sums out of the taxation upon Ireland. He had a pregnant Question on the Paper yesterday in connection with this very question, as to how the Imperial monies extracted from Ireland were spent. If they had been spent on making or completing the harbour of Cork and Haulbowline and rendering them of service to the Navy, there would have been no reason to complain. The conduct of the Admiralty business with regard to Cork was a living and lasting scandal, and an evidence of the incompetence of successive Governments and Government Departments. He could only promise those who, on the part of the Government, had to conduct the debates or discussions on this subject for the Admiralty that, when they again came to consider this particular Vote, hon. Members for Ireland would again raise the question and would endeavour to point out to a new House of Commons the particular grievances of Ireland in respect to the expenditure of Imperial monies in Ireland. He trusted that by the time the session was over the Government and the House would be in full possession of the grievances which Ireland suffered in regard to the Imperial expenditure of the country.

Dr. AMBROSE said that while he would withdraw his Motion for reduction, he could not but protest against so small a portion of Imperial expenditure being disbursed in Ireland.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

Original Question put, and agreed to.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £275,500, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the Expense of Medical Services, including the cost of Medical Establishments at Home and Abroad, which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1907."

The SECRETARY to the ADMIRALTY (Mr. Edmund Robertson, Dundee) thought it might be convenient if he made a statement as to the remaining Estimates. After the kindness of the Committee he thought it would be wrong for him to claim any further Vote which raised any question of substance except the last three, numbered 13, 14, and 15, which were non-effective Votes, as they dealt with the half-pay of the Reserve and the retired pay of Navy and Marines.

*Mr. ARTHUR LEE said he understood that the right hon. Gentleman proposed to withdraw Votes 3 and 6 and to proceed with Votes 13, 14 and 15. As far as he was concerned, he had no objection, because they were automatic Votes and no contentious points arose upon them. Of course, however, he could not guarantee that some of his hon. friends might not seek to raise points upon them. He understood that the right hon. Gentleman did not propose to proceed with any other Votes.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON said that was so, except Vote 1.

*MR. ARTHUR LEE thought that might raise controversial matter.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON said he should recommend that they should see when they came to it.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

3. £820,700, Half-Pay, Reserved, and Retired Pay.

4. £1,256,300, Naval and Marine Pensions, Gratuities, and Compassionate Allowances.

5. £383,700, Civil Pensions and Gratuities.

Resolutions to be reported upon Monday next; Committee to sit again tomorrow.

SUPPLY [1ST MARCH] REPORT.

Resolutions reported.

NAVY ESTIMATES, 1906–7.

1. "That 129,000 officers, seamen and boys be employed for the Sea and Coast Guard Services for the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1907, including 19,466 Royal Marines."

2. "That a sum, not exceeding £6,810,700, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the Expenses of Wages, etc., to officers, seamen, and boys, Coast Guard, and Royal Marines, which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1907."

Resolutions read a second time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House doth agree with the Committee in the First Resolution."

Debate arising.

Mr. Arthur Lee.

*MR. CHIOZZA MONEY (Paddington, N.) rose to move to reduce the number of men by 5,000. He insisted that it was the duty of the Liberal Party to accentuate the fact that the verdict given by the country at the late election was largely returned on the question of extravagance and waste in the administration of the revenues of the United Kingdom. The figures in the Estimates, which only covered a period dating from the financial year 1897–8 to the end of the current year 1906–7, showed an increase within a few years in the number of men from 96,925 to 129,000. That represented a tremendous growth of the naval expenditure which demanded the attention of every man who had the welfare of the country at heart. While in favour of a large Navy, according to the two-Power standard, he asserted that this standard had long been exceeded and that we were building a Navy approaching to a four-Power standard of naval expenditure. In 1884 we were content with an expenditure of £10,000,000 a year, and in 1886, the year of Lord Randolph Churchill's resignation, the expenditure had risen to £13,000,000, representing half the number of men asked for by this Vote. In that short period of twenty years the number of men which the House was asked to vote had been doubled. The two-Power standard referred to by Lord George Hamilton was France and Russia. With regard to France, we were never on better terms with our ancient enemy. As to Russia, which was once the great bogey, because of which we built ship for ship and gun for gun, and voted man for man, the greater part of her fleet was at the bottom of the ocean. Lord George Hamilton, who had not the advantage they had of being wise after the event, did not then perhaps sufficiently realise that the fleet of Russia was split up into three different parts—one in the Black Sea, another in the Baltic, and the third in the Eastern seas. After the recent war, however, they should at least be wise after the event. In 1893 Mr. Gladstone resigned rather than submit to a Naval increase, in which year the Vote of men was 74,000, or 56,000 less than the House was asked to vote this year, and the Naval expenditure was only £18,000,000 sterling. At that time the Army and Navy combined accounted for £36,000,000 expenditure, which was only £1,000,000 more than the gross expenditure on the Navy in the coming year. That was a very startling and significant fact. He did not urge that there was anything necessarily wrong in big figures. The better test was to make comparisons with the expenditure of other countries. Taking France and Germany together, they spent on their navies £23,000,000 per annum, as compared with our £35,000,000. That alone gave ground for the suspicion that we were a three-Power standard. Last year Mr. Pretyman gave some figures relating to the expenditure on new construction during the ten years from 1895 to 1905, and they were important because, to use the words of the Secretary to the Admiralty, they dominated the whole question of Naval expenditure. During the ten years the United Kingdom spent £70,000,000, France nearly £32,000,000, Russia £28,000,000, and Germany £22,000,000, so that even were the Russian fleet still in being, it would still be the case that our expenditure in those ten years was very little short of the combined expenditure of France, Russia, and Germany. As a matter of fact, the Russian fleet was not in being, and making a comparison with France and Germany alone, we had the fact that in ten years this country spent £70,000,000, while France and Germany spent only £55,000,000. He did not mention the United States, because any question of rupture between this country and the United States had been practically banished from the mind of every right-thinking man. There were two other vital considerations, the first of which was that because this country was a Free Trade country it could build ships better, more cheaply, and more quickly than any other country. That was a very great advantage indeed, and it should never be forgotten in connection with Naval armaments. There was also another point, namely, that dockyards in this country were often used by foreign countries for the building of their war-vessels, which really amounted to an investment of foreign money on behalf of this country, because we could at any moment take up these vessels when they were on our stocks, and use them for our own purposes. All these matters pointed to the fact that the House could wisely and judiciously consider the question of reducing Naval expenditure. This constant increase in the first and last line of defence did not lead to a reduction or even keep stationary the number of men for the Army which the House voted year by year. Whereas in 1895–6 the number of men voted for the Navy was 95,000 and in 1905–6 it was 129,000, in the same period the number of men voted for the Army was 155,000 in 1895–6, and 221,000 in 1905–6, so that the money spent in connection with increased Naval armaments gave no relief as regarded the Army, and he ventured to say that it was the same waste and extravagance which caused increases in both cases. He did not ask for a weak Navy, but submitted that the two-Power standard ought to content the country. This House had a right to say to their naval experts: "We want our two-Power Navy. We will give you £25,000,000, £26,000,000, even £27,000,000, and we shall expect you to give us in return a two-Power Navy and a little more." That would be equivalent to a saving of £10,000,000 or £12,000,000 in the bloated Estimates. If they went back to the figures of 1898–9, they would be well justified and would earn the renewed confidence of the country. He asked the House to remember that when they voted 129,000 men for the Navy, it meant that other men had to labour to supply necessaries for those men. This was an important economic question which went down to the roots of poverty in this country. They were building up vested interests in waste. They were confronted with hon. Members who came to this House pledged to study the interests of towns which were supported by the spending of public money, and so it was that hon. Members got up in this House and said the Government was very extravagant, but would they kindly be extravagant in Ireland, or at Rosyth, Portsmouth, Woolwich, or some other place?

MR. CHARLES DEVLIN said the complaint of the Nationalist Members was that, though Ireland paid towards the cost of the Navy, not a penny was spent on Admiralty work in Ireland; and, further, that that country was already overburdened by taxation, and should not be taxed further.

*Mr. CHIOZZA MONEY said he had no desire to misinterpret the remarks of hon. Members opposite, but certainly some things had been said in the debate coming from hon. Members representing constituents who were often men engaged in work furnished by the waste which was going on in this country. It was a serious consideration that when they had built up—as the late Government and its predecessors had been building up year after year—trades in waste hand over hand, the first effect of reduction should be to cause misery, and, perhaps, destitution, in certain places; but, unfortunately, the painful necessity was forced upon them. He would not plead for sudden reductions—that would be cruel to places like Portsmouth and Woolwich; but it must be done gradually, and it would not cause a greater dislocation of industry than was caused by calling men into these industries of waste. They were called in gradually, and let them be called out gradually. The final consideration was that a sound state of finance was the greatest strength in war, as it was in peace. Even prosperous Free-Trade England could not stand this drain, and he warned them that if they insisted upon a war expenditure in times of peace, it would go hard with this country when the next war arrived; and if they desired to make progress with the political and social reforms which had been actually promised, they must reduce unprofitable expenditure and divert the national wealth to truly national needs.

*Mr. SPEAKER proceeded to put the Question that the House agree with the Committee in the said Resolution, and then called upon Mr. Byles.

*Mr. CHIOZZA MONEY said he begged to move a reduction of 5,000 men.

*Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. Gentleman is too late. I asked him whether he wished to make a reduction, and he concluded his speech without doing so, and I have now put the Question that the House do agree with the Committee in the said Resolution.

Mr. BYLES (Salford, N.) said he would move, if necessary, the reduction which his hon. friend had desired to move. They had voted a great deal of money for the Navy in the last few days, and he could not assent to the report of this large Vote without raising his voice. He had put before his constituents the view that the security of the country could be amply provided for by a much smaller expenditure either upon the Army or the Navy, and he did not believe that the poor people among his constituents desired to spend their hard-earned wages upon costly ships and munitions of war and for keeping thousands of men for the purpose of destruction. Lord Randolph Churchill, when Chancellor of the Exchequer a good many years ago, said that if the foreign policy of this country was conducted with skill our huge armaments would be quite unnecessary, and the taxation they involved unjustifiable. Yet we were spending twice as much now as at the time when those words were spoken. If our naval strength was to depend on our policy, then it was relevant to point out in the first place that the Russian navy had been practically destroyed, and that it would take ten years to restore it; secondly, we had now an *entente cordiale* with France, which had led the Government to reduce the strength of the Mediterranean Fleet; thirdly, we had friendly relations with Italy and the other Mediterranean Powers; and fourthly, our relations with the United States were so friendly that it was absolutely unthinkable that we should ever get into conflict with that great Anglo-Saxon Power. In these circumstances, was not the reason for this vast expenditure largely removed? If the Navy was in the nature of an insurance, then when the risks were lessened the premium ought to be lessened also. He acknowledged that the Government had been obliged to a large extent to put before the House the Estimates of their predecessors, and it might seem inconsistent on his part to make the observations he had done. He was disappointed that the Secretary to the Admiralty had not encouraged them to look for a large reduction in naval expenditure. On the contrary, he understood the right hon. Gentleman to say that we must look for automatic increases in the Navy expenditure.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON said that what he stated was that he had had a table prepared of the prospective naval expenditure of this country based on the assumption that new construction, which dominated the whole of our naval expenditure, was to remain practically at the level it had reached this year, and that no material change would take place in the other Votes. On that footing a calculation was made by his order in the Admiralty, which showed what the prospective expenditure in these five years would be owing to automatic increases which could not be prevented in annuities and in the non-effective Votes. The result was that the expenditure would rise by about £2,000,000 in the five years.

MR. BYLES said he was glad the right hon. Gentleman had given the House some expectation that there would be a reduction in the expenditure. In addition to the reasons he had stated for believing that the expenditure on the Navy should be reduced there was the fact that in the Far East we had now a thoroughly effective alliance with a Power which had control of the Pacific Ocean. The House ought to expect from this advanced Government an indication that there was a prospect that the naval and military expenditure, which had grown so terribly in recent years, would be substantially reduced.

*MR. VERNEY (Buckinghamshire, N.) said it had been stated that the naval and military armaments should be regarded as a national insurance. It seemed to him that insurance required the observance of two great principles. In the first place they must consider the amount of property they had to insure, and secondly they had to consider the risks against which that property was to be insured. If they took into account only the amount of property, there was no doubt whatever that there was a strong reason for increasing our insurance, because our property had increased in the last ten years by leaps and bounds. A few months ago Lord Avebury, a great financial authority, had made a statement of extreme interest in regard to the growth of the wealth of the nation, and the increase of extraordinary expenditure, which he thought was absolutely unpardonable from the economic point of view. Lord Avebury reminded them that in ten years our total exports and imports had risen from £702,000,000 to £922,000,000. From the point of view of the rise in the amount of our national property, we might be justified in increasing the premium of our national insurance.

And, it being Half-past Seven of the Clock, the Debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed To-morrow.

Subsequent Resolution to be further considered To-morrow.

EVENING SITTING.

PAYMENT OF MEMBERS.

*MR. W. H. LEVER (Cheshire, Wirral) rose to call attention to the question of payment of Members of Parliament, and to move: "That, in the opinion of this House, the time has now arrived when it is urgently required, in order to give to every constituency an equal, free, and unhampered selection of parliamentary representatives, that all members of Parliament should be paid by the State a sum at the rate of £300 per annum." He said that he had also intended to direct attention to the question of the payment of the election expenses of Members, but after the Resolution adopted by the House the previous evening that became unnecessary. In his opinion, the payment of Members was required to maintain the dignity and prestige of the House, and he believed it would enormously raise the efficiency of the House. Members were paid at one time, and with the gradual disuse of the system one very well-known writer in the first half of the seventeenth century declared that—

> "It was the bane of Parliament that Members were not paid, because when they were paid the electors chose men who understood their duties and attended to them."

While the great Benjamin Franklin, at a later period, said that—

> "When Members of Parliament were paid they went to Parliament as a duty and not as a privilege."

In 1780 a Committee of the House was appointed, and they recommended that Members should be paid, on the ground that—

> "It would be a return to the wholesome practice of former times."

He called special attention to the use of the word "wholesome." It was said that the payment of Members would also apply to a great many other representative bodies in this country—to county and borough councils, to urban district and to parish councils—and that it would strike at the root of the great system of voluntary service which had been established. But if they inquired into the constitution of those local bodies, it would be seen that they only supplied an argument for the payment of Members of this House. The county councils did their work in the daytime, their meetings being held in the most central part of the county, and unsurmountable difficulties were placed in the way of labour representatives who lived in the outlying districts in the way of time and fares, with the result that there was not a proper representation of those classes on our county councils. During the time that he served on the Cheshire County Council there was not a single representative of labour upon it, and he understood that that was the case now. The position of the London County Council in this regard was exceptional owing to the facilities of travelling, and consequently there were many representatives of labour on that council, who added dignity and prestige to its deliberations. Another objection raised to the payment of Members was that representatives of the mass of the people could and did get into Parliament. They had a great number of them in this Parliament, and other Members were proud of their presence, because the representatives of the people in the House exercised a wholesome influence on the whole House. But these men could only come if they placed a burden on their friends, or upon that section of the community which sent them to Parliament. Was it right and just that a nation, in order to secure complete representation, should place such a burden on any one class? And could it add to the dignity of the House that Members should be placed in such a position—a position in which they could not have the fullest measure of independence which everyone desired. There was no alternative. They must have either sectional representation, and therefore incomplete representation, or the payment of Members by the State, with perfect freedom to carry on the business of the State, subject to the approval of the electors. The moderate amount of remuneration which he suggested in the resolution could not be any inducement to the "professional politician"—the man who might wish to become a Member of the House for purely selfish ends—nor could it be any inducement to a Labour representative, for a working man receiving 36s. or 40s. per week at the bench or in the mechanics shop would be infinitely better off than a Member of Parliament receiving £300 a year and having to bear the expenses incidental to the position of Members of this House. Nor would the sum be any inducement to the wrong kind of politician. Neither was there anything in the argument that if Members were paid the electors would be less vigilant in their duties than they were at present. The Labour Members in the present Parliament gave the House the utmost confidence in increasing their number, and in making it possible for the mass of the people to have at least a fair share in the representation of the country. Moreover, if they adopted this system, they would have a fairer representation of the whole country than they had had in the past. In this House they had a working model of the system he advocated. There were Members of the House who were paid—Members who constituted the Government. He submitted that it was not because they could not form a Government unless its Members were paid. He was confident that there were Members of the House who would be perfectly willing to take any position in the Government without a salary. But the House decided to pay the Members of the Government in order that there might be no hindrance in the choice of men to form the Government—men with strength of brain and of conscience, and not length of pocket should be the qualification. But they carried the payment of Members of the Ministry even further, for if they were satisfied that an ex-Minister was not in a position to maintain the dignity of the position he was in when a Minister, they voted him a sufficient sum to enable him to continue for the remainder of his days in such a position that he would not cast any indignity upon the House or himself.

This working model—the payments made to the Members whom he had indicated—inspired them with confidence that if they treated the rank and file of the House in exactly the same way they would not only suit their own convenience, but would also be considering the dignity of the House in carrying this Resolution. The £300 a year proposed was only an enabling salary. There was not a man in the House with the ability of those now there—he did not care of what rank they were—who could not turn his talents to such purpose as would make a greater amount than that. It was only sufficient to make the right kind of man thoroughly independent. It was not enough to attract the wrong kind of man. Out of that amount there would be a great deal of expense to be borne. Out of it a Member could settle the question of the postage stamps, and so relieve the Postmaster-General of a dilemma; he would also be in a position to pay his railway fares, and so settle the question whether Members should be granted passes from the railway companies. They would have to sit on railway companies and would have to judge them. The total amount of money that would be required to carry out this scheme was somewhere about £200,000 a year; but if they considered that this House was the one and only authority in this country free from the control of the other House—that this House had the sole control of the finances of the country—they would realise that the payment of £200,000 was merely 2s. 6d. per cent. on the amount the House had to control—very little more than a banker's commission and very much less than an insurance premium for fidelity. He did not think that any business firm would expect to get the management of its finances done so well and so cheaply. Would any man in business expect to get his affairs managed, involving such a large amount of money, for less than £300 a year? The amount was moderate, but at the same time it was ample, because they did not want to do more than make an enabling grant. He had been asked, since his Resolution was announced, whether it would not meet the case to make this payment of Members optional—to allow a Member to declare whether he would have it or not. He must say he could not accept that suggestion. It would be grossly unfair to every Member of the House. There was only one condition upon which he could accept such a proposal, namely, that the names of the Members who received it should be kept strictly secret, and then he was convinced that when the amount paid was made public it would show that not a single Member had refused it. He begged to move.

MR. VIVIAN (Birkenhead), in seconding the Motion, observed that it could not be said that his hon. friend had any special interest in bringing it forward. His hon. friend would pardon him for that reference, for the contrast between the mover and the seconder from that point of view was very marked indeed. He desired to put one or two points in connection with the payment of Members and the attitude of workmen on this question. In seconding the Motion he was to a very small extent influenced either by the custom of foreign countries, where they paid Members, or even by the custom within the Empire itself, where, he understood, this country was practically the only exception. It was true that in past generations we had payment of Members, and some of our greatest politicians of the last century supported the reintroduction of this principle, notably, Charles James Fox, Roebuck, and Joseph Hume, but he felt that this was a practical question for them to settle in connection with the particular circumstances and conditions of their own country. They had to consider it in the light of the enormous change that had taken place during the last fifty years in the character of the Government of this country. The enormous amount of decentralisation that had taken place, and the extent to which the people of the country as a whole participated in the government of the country, made this question of more importance to-day than it had been in years gone by. It seemed to be the one great barrier left to the real representation of the people in this House. It was because of the great changes in the Government and in the electorate of this country that they were called upon to consider this question at the present moment. Mr. Balfour a short time ago used these words—

> "Every wise statesman, be his politics what they may, would desire to bring the institutions of a country into conformity with the needs and wishes of the people of the country."

What were the needs of the country to-day? One of the needs of the country to-day was that the people should have unrestricted choice in the selection of their representatives in this House. There should be no sense of inequality, no feeling of injustice on the part of any section of the community; the contest for a position in the House should be open to all in a real and practical sense. But he maintained that the choice was limited to-day by the absence of remuneration to Members of the House, and a large proportion of the people of the country felt that they were not free to have the representatives they desired to select. He felt certain that some hon. Members might probably regard this step as an attack upon wealth. [OPPOSITION cries of "No, no."] He was glad to hear that "No, no" from the Opposition Benches. Large numbers of people assumed at any rate that wealth in itself was a mark of capacity. [OPPOSITION cries of "No, no."] He asserted that Members who formerly represented the Party opposite held that view, and if the Party opposite had become so liberalised as to reject that doctrine he welcomed their conversion. He, however, was there to assert that the Party represented by hon. Gentlemen opposite had resisted, at every stage, the breaking down of the barriers to the free selection of representatives of the people. They had regarded existing conditions as obstacles to prevent the introduction of undesirables into this House. In that respect they were not unlike the Aliens Act passed last session, but unlike that Act they did not prevent the introduction of undesirables. The whole assumption that the possession of material wealth was the measure of political wisdom, virtue, and character was false. He maintained that there was no evidence to support that. Wealth was not the hall-mark of character, or ability, or even of political honesty, and with every generation it was less and less so. Broadly speaking, those personal qualities which were valuable in politics were possessed in no greater degree by those in this House having an income of over £500 a year than by those who earned less than that sum. With the spread of education we had given to a large number of people the opportunity to take a larger share in the government of the country, and with the gradual rise of large numbers of the working classes into positions of responsibility it was evident that no one section of the community had naturally a monopoly of the qualities which went to make up a good politician. It was John Stuart Mill who said, in discussing the extension of the franchise to the working people, that the qualities for exercising rightly the duties of suffrage would come by their exercise. It was being proved that as the working people had the opportunity of exercising those qualities, those qualities grew. He made no claim for any special virtue in the class to which he was proud to belong. There might be labour leaders who took a narrow and sordid view of their position, and regarded themselves as mere delegates of the special interests they represented; but there were also in this House representatives of joint-stock interests in quite as low a way. His point was not to score one class against another, but merely to show that no section of the community had special qualities that would fit them to govern other sections of the community. His claim was that all should have an equal opportunity in taking part in the government of the country. He submitted that there was a pressing need at the present moment for the step now proposed. At any rate his opinion was that unless the community as a whole, through this House, boldly took upon itself the duty of remunerating the Members of this House, the poorer Members would get their remuneration from other sources, which, in the main, involved their regarding themselves as the representatives of the interests which paid them. Surely the ideal which ought to be aimed at in regard to representation in this House was that it was the interest of the country, using the term in its widest sense, which should be represented. That ideal could not always be attained. Circumstances were occasionally too strong for them, but they could here and there check, by judicious statesmanship, the inroads which sectional interests could make to the detriment of the commonweal. His point was that unless the public paid, others would, and it would be the interests of the others which would be looked after and not the interests of the public. One reason for his strong opposition to the policy of the right hon. Member for West Birmingham was that under it we should have a house made up of trade groups, the driving force of each of which would be the hope of public plunder. His desire was that they should as far as they could prevent that spirit from growing up in the House, and he submitted that unless the House took steps to ensure the payment of every Member in the House by the community as a whole, large numbers would continue to come into the House with small incomes. They would be paid by sectional interests, and they would feel that they must represent those interests instead of the interests of the country as a whole. He was conscious of the fact that the Labour Members who had come into the House were of a very high type, and the father of the labour Members, the right hon. Member for Morpeth, was a man of that stamp who set a splendid example of devotion to the public welfare. He asked that this step should be taken not merely because the work was worth paying for, but on higher grounds; it would secure more purity when they came to give their votes. He asked no favour on this question for the workmen. From his point of view workmen who asked for favours ought to be moved into the House of Lords. Unless a workman showed himself in his struggle with others, he did not care whether it was on the political battleground or elsewhere, unless he could prove in his own case the doctrine of the survival of the fittest, he had no claim to enter this House. It was as citizens that they claimed to be paid by citizens. Citizenship should be the basis of our political life, and not class or trade interest. Members of this assembly derived their mandate directly, of course, from the constituencies they represented, but they were also, in another sense, representatives of the nation as a whole. Again, they owned some allegiance to the Party under whose banner they served, and to whose influence to some extent their presence in the House was due. They had, as it were, three masters to serve—their constituencies, the country as a whole, and party allegiance. There was a tendency in some quarters to decry party allegiance, and cheap sneers cast at party Government were quite unjustifiable. He waited for a suggestion of a better method for conducting the business of the House than by the agency of one Party or another. Again, it was important to point out that Members of this House were not mere delegates. He should be sorry to see the time when Members became mere delegates of any one interest, or even of the interests of the constituency which sent them to Parliament. They had occasionally to act in accordance with their own judgment, and possibly in opposition to their constituents' wishes, or even the wishes of the country. Some independence of action was essential, although its degree was difficult to define; but what was certain was that independence and individuality would become less and less if Members were paid by sectional groups of interests to perform public work. Personally he refused to accept the proposition that a Member of the House should become a mere marionette pulled by some unseen influence behind the scenes such, as someone near him suggested, as the Tariff Reform League. He found that quite a number of eminent politicians supported the claims for the payment of Members, amongst them the right hon. Member for Berwick, who had been for many years a staunch upholder of the principle. He had been rather interested and not a little amused at some observations on this question which the right hon. Gentleman had lately made. They were as follows:—

> "No doubt under a system of payment of Members some needy and unscrupulous adventurers will find their way into Parliament, but they will do so largely by displacing other adventurers who are less needy, but not less unscrupulous. Some people in arguing against payment of Members seemed to forget that there is room for improvement as well as for deterioration in the character of the House of Commons."

He relied upon the right hon. Gentleman to support this Resolution and on the Government carrying it into practice. He had never been able to understand why a Member or his friends should have to pay heavy expenses to get into the House to serve the public, and even after he had got in to be regarded—as some hon. Member informed him they were—as a sort of glorified relieving officer for all and sundry in his constituency. Surely the time had come when it was desirable that that kind of thing should end, and that both Member and constituency should take a more serious view of politics. Modern conditions demanded that in future Members should give more detailed attention to the work of the House. Year by year the questions which came forward for settlement were increasing. Year by year the influence of Parliament was extending, as was also its control over the different aspects of our national life; and, unless Members received remuneration, these duties would not be discharged as they ought to be, and the interests of the public would suffer. It had been suggested that the charge should be made a local one. While not wishing to be dogmatic, he could scarcely agree to that suggestion; for it seemed to him that it would lead to the very evils which he had been arguing against. Some hon. Members appeared to regard themselves as commercial travellers for their constituencies, and their whole object seemed to be to secure Government orders for the towns they represented. He held that the highest and best interests of the public would be served only if the charge were made a national one. He was satisfied that the dignity of the House would be enhanced by this Resolution being carried into effect. The cost would not be great. His hon. friend had suggested that it would reach £200,000 a year. He was aware that the Chancellor of the Exchequer would naturally plead poverty and that he had limited means at his disposal. The right hon. Gentleman would have no more ardent advocate for economy in public expenditure than himself. It was the one thing needed in order to get the national finances straight. The national credit had to be re-established, and the right hon. Gentleman would find no more ardent supporters in all his efforts than the Members of the House who supported this Resolution. The trade unions he was proud to be connected with were with him on this question. He maintained that the cost would be small, and when they considered what was to be achieved at that small cost, he trusted the right hon. Gentleman would see his way to support the Resolution which he was now seconding. He felt confident that it would be one more step in the broadening of the character of this House, and causing the whole nation to feel that it was at least no longer a club, or the path to mere social distinction or society life, but that it was a real people's chamber in which the interests of the people were closely looked after and cared for.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That, in the opinion of this House, the time has now arrived when it is urgently required, in order to give to every constituency an equal, free, and unhampered selection of Parliamentary representatives, that all Members of Parliament should be paid by the State a sum at the rate of £300 per annum."—(*Mr. W. H. Lever.*)

*SIR HENRY KIMBER (Wandsworth) said he was quite sure that no Member of the House would cavil at the manner in which the mover and seconder of the Resolution had supported it; but at the same time he ventured to submit that their argument did not lead logically to the conclusion they wished to arrive at. He desired to find as much common ground as he could with the hon. Gentlemen, and to associate himself with them in the belief that the presence of a large number of Labour Members in the House was a distinct advantage, because the House would be able to hear from them directly their experience and their point of view on the great labour questions of the day. He was not going to quarrel with the mover and seconder on the reasonableness of the amount of remuneration which they considered the labour of hon. Members was worth. Three hundred pounds a year must be admitted to be a moderate amount to pay for the exertions which any hon. Member had to put forth in doing his duty, but it was one thing for a man to deserve a sum of money, and another thing to take it out of the nearest pocket he could find in his neighbourhood. He submitted that the House itself, by any majority, had not the power to pass this Resolution. It had been vainly boasted that the House was omnipotent; but it was not omnipotent. There were many things it could not do, and among them it could not, as the custodians of the public purse, authorise its Members to dip their fingers into that purse and help themselves to what it might please them to take. It had been pointed out quite rightly that the members of the Government of the day were paid. That was true, but they had the sanction of the taxpayers outside, for they had to submit themselves to re-election after accepting paid office. Ministers were in a different position from the rank and file of the House. It was the Ministers of the day who were the servants of the public and not the ordinary Members. [Cries of "No, no."] That was a very important distinction. In the first place, they could not compare the labours of the Ministers of this great country with the labours of ordinary Members. The Ministers of the day were no doubt servants of the State, and were rightly paid, and it was the duty of ordinary Members to see that these servants performed their duties in a proper manner, and proposed laws for the benefit of the country. Members had first to consider their respective constituencies. ["Oh!"] Well they represented their interests, and not necessarily class interests, but their best interests, although they might be great or small. Each Member individually only represented one part of the country the whole of which that House represented. Therefore it seemed to him that the proper party to pay the representative was the constituency. Take the ordinary constituency of a Labour Member. It was necessarily large and made the Labour Member in this House all the more valuable. Suppose he represented 6,000 voters and was paid £300 a year; that would represent just about a farthing a week to every one of the 6,000 voters. That could not be considered a great burden. There was a line of *ultra vires* which even this House could not pass, and they could not put their hands in the pockets of the taxpayers and take out their money without their consent. If they passed this Resolution, they were going to mulct the taxpayers of the country in damages without their even being heard. Who was going to represent the interests of the taxpayers of the country, when Members of this House decided the case in their own favour? Quite apart, however, from the question of *ultra vires*, and in this he was sure he should have the support of the learned Attorney-General, it had been held ever since we had any system of jurisprudence at all, that the law would not permit any person in a fiduciary capacity to attempt to make a profit out of his trust, and would make accountable any person who made such an attempt. Suppose the House permitted what he ventured to say was an illegality, the Attorney-General or any body else could lay an information challenging the action of Members—whether they were in a majority or not—who voted for and carried a Resolution which took money out of the pockets of the ratepayers and put it in their own. It might be a new case, but he could not see any arguable ground against such a case being raised. He recollected an utterance of the late Lord Selborne on appeal in a case in which the Court below had decided that the plaintiff had sustained a wrong at the hands of the defendant but that there were no means by which he could find a remedy. Lord Selborne said—

> "This Court, if it finds a wrong, will find an arm long enough to provide a remedy."

One of the Attorney-General's supporters, only a night or two ago, reminded the hon.

and learned Gentleman that the law officers of the Crown were paid—and he was sure they were not too highly paid—for giving the Members of the House the best legal advice. He should therefore leave it to the Attorney-General to give them his advice, as to what would be their position if they voted for this Resolution and took money out of the pockets of the taxpayers. If they had a right to vote £300 a year why not £3,000. The appetite for salaries grew by what it fed on. They could, if the principle were upheld, take what they wanted without any restraint or scruple, except that imposed by conscience. But consciences sometimes became elastic, and they had seen a very fine illustration of this in the difference in a man's valuation of himself when he was only a candidate and when he became a Member. He hoped a very eminent member of the Government would take what he said as a pleasantry, which it was meant to be. Out of the House he put the maximum value upon himself or upon any other man of £500 a year. Now he as President of the Local Government Board valued himself at £2,000. which was four times as much. He was sure, however, that the work of the right hon. Gentleman was well worth the remuneration he received for his Department. But the episode showed that there was no limit which could be fixed. But even that was not all. The tendency of the payment of Members out of the pockets of the State, of which they were the custodians, had a tendency to deteriorate the character of the House. He should like to quote a statement by John Stuart Mill, which was approved by Henry Fawcett, in regard to what would be the effect of payment of Members in producing what is called the professional politician—the carpet bagger, who ran about the country, to see what support he could get to obtain a situation of £300 a year. He did not mean to say that every man of that kind would have no principle at all, and he quite admitted that in America there were some men of that class, though not popular there, who became very eminent men, and having devoted their lives to politics, did their best for their country, but as Mill said, the constant meddling of this class of men who felt bound to do something for their salaries would be intolerable. Whether constituencies might contribute to the support of their Member was a different question, but there was no reason to doubt that such a course as that now proposed would deteriorate the character of the body and would diminish the respect in which it was held by the public. Constituencies might send up independent men who were paid, but how could a man be made more free and independent by accepting a dole out of the State funds. The question might also arise whether or not in special cases, or in times of prosperity or depression, the allowance should be increased or decreased, but the effect of the whole proposal was to make a Member dependent upon the State. This would make him less free and independent. There was one more point he wished to make, and he desired it to be understood that he imputed no motives. He did not say that Ministers of the day or Members would have any intention to use a question of this kind for the purpose of exercising unfair or undue influence upon any Section of the House, but whatever the intention was, the fact remained that it could be so used. He should like to know whether the Government intended to support this Motion or not. If they did what was the only inference? That they wished to conciliate and obtain the good will of a certain section of the House. ["Oh!"] That was fair comment and the fact was incontestable. That was one way of getting that support, and although they might say they did not do it for that, hon. Members might form their own private judgment as to whether that was not the effect of it. He was not going into ancient history, but he would simply refer to the histories of the Republics of Greece and Rome, and ask hon. Members to consider whether, among the causes which brought those Republics to grief, arrangements of this kind for applying and dividing public money among those who governed the politics of the State were not one of the first if not the chief cause of their downfall. He appealed to all Members, whether old or new, not to spoil the traditions of this House by allowing anything to be recorded on its journals which would enable an enemy to say that the Members of it had any pocket interest in managing its affairs. He begged to move the Amendment which stood in his name.

*MR. EVELYN CECIL (Aston Manor) seconded the Amendment on general grounds, because he thought that the legal and constitutional bearing of this question ought not to be lost sight of in this discussion. Adoption of this particular proposal was without precedent so far as our history went. When originally Members were paid, they were paid by their constituents, by means of a rate levied upon them. That was the case in the Plantagenet times, on various occasions since, and in the case of the famous Andrew Marvell in the time of Charles II. Now, however, it was asked that private Members, like Ministers, should be servants of the State, and not, as at present, be the servants of their constituents. They all took an interest in this House and wished to get the best men to serve in it. They all hoped that merely means and wealth would not affect the question, as they wanted to get the best men, irrespective of their private means or of those by whom they were supported. That was their common object but was it likely that this proposal would bring them any nearer to it? An hon. Member had said that £300 was no inducement, but if it was no inducement why give it? If, however, it was an inducement he thought it raised difficulties of a serious character. It would involve a serious strain being thrown upon Members who had no private means of their own in the event of certain important measures being brought forward, say Home Rule or Tariff Reform, or trades disputes, because if a Member were dependent for his living upon the salary he got as a Member of the House, he would feel that if he voted against them, he would lose his whole means of livelihood. It was obvious that there were questions in regard to which that aspect of the case would arise, and he, therefore, protested against any departure of this kind. While he felt the force of the appeal that had been made he desired that Members of the House should be independent and should not be delegates. Edmund Burke, shortly after he had been elected for Bristol, told his constituents that they must remember that then he was not merely Member for Bristol, but a Member of Parliament, and that it was their duty to expect him to take a wide view of matters, and to act independently sometimes of them, and not to rely upon their support. Where should they be if this legislation was passed? They could not exercise that independence which was so essential to a Member of the House. He was not sure, in view of what he had just said, and in view of the experience of other countries, that that was the case. He was in the United States last year, and was very much struck while in Washington by the fact that much more dignity was apparently considered to attach to eminent business men, or say, railway kings, than was supposed to belong to Congressmen and politicians. He might be wrong in attributing the cause entirely to the fact that the Members were paid, but he did think that that had something to do with it. There was no doubt a widespread feeling in the United States—he supposed it was largely in consequence of the Members being paid—that legislators were not in a position of such dignity as those who had come to the front more by their own business powers and independence. That was a reason which, he thought, would present itself to many Americans and to many citizens of foreign countries, and before this House launched themselves into an experiment of this kind, they must bear in mind the experience of other countries. Much had been said about professional politicians. He wanted to be saved from professional politicians, and that would not be if they paid themselves as was proposed. It was much more likely that they would not get so many Labour Members, and they would be much more likely to get—if he might so describe him without offence—that individual known as the briefless barrister. There was another point which had not been mentioned. If legislative attendance in the House of Commons was to be paid, he would like to know whether it was to be paid in the other House. [Cries of "No,"] Surely the legislative duties in either House were of a very similar character? [Renewed cries of "No."] Hon. Members seemed amused, but if they received £1 a day or whatever sum it was, they ought in justice to pay the same to Members of the other House according to the length of their sittings. He quite agreed that it reduced the proposition to rather an absurdity, but that was one of the strongest reasons for throwing out this Resolution. He did not want either House to be paid. The chief advantage, he believed, that was claimed for the Motion was that they would get candidates of all kinds irrespective of financial influences. He did not think they would be able to rid themselves of financial influences altogether, even if they paid members £300 a year each. If the object of paying this money was to get more Labour Members into the House—and if they got the best Labour Members he was extremely glad to see them—he could not think that that was really a good argument, because it could hardly be said after the last election that that result could not be attained under the present system. The large number of Labour Members elected at the last election was some proof at any rate that under the existing system they could get a very solid Labour representation, and that there was no need for spending another £200,000 of public money in order to secure any difference. The only other advantage he could think of was that Party funds would not require so much support. Under the present system the independence of the House had been well maintained, the Members elected had been true representatives of the electorate, and he saw no sufficient grounds for so drastic a proposal as was suggested in the Resolution.

Amendment proposed—

"In line 1, to leave out from the word 'That' to the end of the Question, and add the words 'it is not competent or desirable for this House of its own Motion, and being the custodian and protector of the public purse, and acting therein in a fiduciary capacity to the taxpayers of this country, to vote for and to pay or appropriate to its own Members out of that purse any money for their own personal use and benefit." (*Sir Henry Kimber.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Resolution."

*Mr. ATHERLEY-JONES (Durham, N.W.) said he presumed that if this Motion were carried the Prime Minister would afford facilities for it to be put into immediate effect, because he remembered a debate in this House in the year 1893 when the late Sir William Harcourt saw that payment of Members would involve a great constitutional change, and that such a change ought not to be effected by a side stroke, but that it should be carried into effect by a legislative enactment. Now it was perfectly clear that if this were left to legislation there was no possible chance of the aspiration which had found expression in this Resolution ever being carried into effect, and therefore a very futile course had been adopted in bringing forward the Motion, unless they anticipated that the Government would put it into effect if carried by a substantial majority, and he knew no constitutional reason why it should not be carried into effect. There was a very simple expedient, and that was to embody it in the Budget. The only objection to this would be that in the event of a change of administration it would be competent for the new administration to leave it out of the Budget. He must say that he had in the past been a consistent opponent of payment of Members. But times changed, and, without any coercion on the part of his constituency, his views were considerably modified on this question. He differed from the mover of the Resolution in his appeal to foreign precedents. He did not think they were of much practical value.

Mr. W. H. LEVER said he expressly disclaimed any appeal to the practice prevailing in foreign countries.

*Mr. ATHERLEY-JONES said he believed it was the seconder rather than the proposer who used the argument.

Mr. VIVIAN said he also expressly disclaimed any such appeal.

*Mr. ATHERLEY-JONES said he was glad to hear it because it absolved him from the necessity of pointing out that the circumstances under which the payment of Members had been established in foreign countries had no bearing upon the desirability or undesirability of the practice. He appealed to supporters of the Resolution not altogether to disregard those considerations which had been urged with some force by the last speaker. He was far from thinking that the argument as to the "professional politician" should be dismissed with contempt; and he wished to point out that in no foreign country or colony where Members were paid had that payment resulted in the creation of a Labour Party in the sense in which such a Party now existed in this House. It was also a noteworthy fact that in Germany, Italy, and in England, in each of which countries there was no payment of Members, there was a larger body of Labour Members than in any Assembly where Members were paid. When he spoke of Labour Members he meant men who belonged to those who were euphemistically termed the working-classes of the country. What he wished to draw attention to was that the State was now being asked to incur an extra charge of £200,000 a year. He could not consider £200,000 a year a bagatelle. It would provide 13,000 people with old-age pensions. The income of the trade unions was £2,500,000, and to provide £300 a year to 100 of their own representatives would require only £30,000 a year. Organised labour was now returning with very little effort working-men representatives. The House was asked to give away £200,000 a year. What for? For working-class representatives. [Cries of "No."] He expected that "No," but he had the courage to repeat what he had said, and he would tell why he had said it. The briefless barrister, to which category he supposed he, more or less, belonged at the time he first entered this House, and the journalist could come into the House of Commons and carry on their profession, but the working men could not come into the House and carry on their business; and, therefore, it was solely in the interests of working men, and rightly so, that this scheme of payment of Members was formulated. What other class were they going to benefit? They would not seduce the farmer, the tradesman, or the struggling manufacturer from their business. The only people who would be got were briefless barristers, lecturers, and journalists. Why should they incur this great expense of £200,000 when £30,000 would suffice to provide for 100 Members, because the Labour Party did not expect to get more. ["Why?"] At present there were fifty Labour Members, it was not reasonable to expect that the number would be more than doubled; if it were, then further provisions could be made. He thought the Labour Party had done extremely well at the last election. The working man had no more difficult task than that of persuading his fellow-citizens that he should represent them in Parliament rather than the professional man or the capitalist. But the working men had no right to shape the financial policy of the country on the basis that they would be able to secure more than a hundred Members in the next Parliament. Yet those who spoke on behalf of working men were anxious to draw from the pockets of the taxpayers £200,000 when £30,000 would meet their requirements. That was his conviction, and he trusted that his hon. friends would believe that he was not animated with any petty or jealous motives in the attitude he was taking. Inasmuch as the Labour Members were now able to speak with authority in this House, he thought that at least they should limit the payment of Members to the exigencies of the situation and not insist upon payment being provided for other classes who did not require it.

*MR. J. WARD (Stoke-on-Trent) said he wished to say a word or two in support of the Resolution which had been so ably proposed by the hon. Member for Wirral and seconded by the hon. Member for Birkenhead. He was afraid it would be necessary for him to deal with some of the criticisms passed by the hon. Member for North West Durham before he proceeded to deal with the Resolution itself. The hon. Member for North West Durham had said, and he admitted its force, that it was possible in certain circumstances for Labour to secure representation in the House even under present conditions. But the House should not forget that every constituency of trade unionists was called upon to support in Parliament men who were not merely attending to trade-union questions, but to the business of the nation as well. These men surely should not be individually fined for filling a representative position in Parliament. It was quite true that the Labour Party had succeeded in geting a fairly good proportion of Members elected at the last election, and it had been suggested that there should be a limit to their number, and further that they could not hope to secure more than 100 in any future Parliament. He hoped in the future to see labour proportionately represented in this House just in proportion to its influence and numbers in the community in general, and anything like a fair proportion of representation labour would require far more than 100 representatives. It was not necessary for him to reply to all the criticisms of the hon. Member for North West Durham, but he might say that he would much rather the hon. Member had sat on the Opposition benches and delivered his address from the other side among the Tariff Reformers than from the Ministerial side. It was a most sinister speech, because it did not definitely oppose this Motion, but it was an attempt to damn this proposal by faint praise and he would sooner have a declared opponent than a false friend. He pointed out also that the late Sir William Harcourt stated in 1895, when this Question was discussed, that—

> "When I have the opportunity I will do what I can to give effect to the principle embodied in this Resolution."

The resolution which Sir William Harcourt supported and said he would adopt stated—

> "That, as the principle of gratuitous public service, on which the representation of this House is at present based, limits the freedom of constituencies in the selection of their representatives, this House is of opinion that a reasonable annual allowance should forthwith be granted to all Members of Parliament."

Unfortunately, the Government came to an end within a few months of the passing of that Resolution, or else the payment of Members would have been an accomplished fact. Several members of the present Government had when in Opposition made statements on this subject. The present Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, in a debate in that House in 1894, said that—

> "Having extended the franchise, the House of Commons was bound to make the choice of candidates free."

The right hon. Gentleman also expressed the belief—

> "That with good average human nature, payment intensified and did not weaken the sense of obligation."

That was exactly the position of the Labour Party towards this proposal, and they wanted a definite statement from the Government as to what they intended to do. It was a most curious thing that he himself was represented in that House by the hon. Member for Wandsworth, who had always been hostile to labour interests in the constituency. He was surprised, having lived in the locality for some twenty years, and knowing how hostile he had been to everything connected with labour interests in his own constituency, at the hon. Member's observation that he wanted to see more Labour Members in this House. He only wished that the hon. Member's actions tallied somewhat with the opinions he had expressed this evening. The hon. Member for Wandsworth said the House was not omnipotent, but he would remind him that Mr. Pitt said it was, and he did not think even the hon. Member for Wandsworth would put his opinion upon that point against a gentleman of the calibre and Parliamentary reputation of Mr. Pitt.

*Sir HENRY KIMBER: I would.

*Mr. J. WARD said he thought the hon. Member possessed some modesty but evidently he had been mistaken. The hon. Member had said that they were not the servants of the State, but he should like to know if in making that statement he was speaking from his own personal experience, or was he applying his suggestion to the whole of the other Members of the House. He knew that the hon. Member for Wandsworth had had considerable experience in company business and the relationship between directors and shareholders, and he did not know whether his suggestion meant that Members of the House of Commons were in the position of shareholders and the Government were the directors. He thought the Members of the House of Commons were servants of the State. They had been appointed by their constituencies to perform public duties, and therefore they ought to be paid by the State. It had been said that this proposal was like putting their hands in somebody else's pocket, but he was not personally in that position at any rate. It was only necessary for him to point out that three paragraphs in his election address dealt with the very subject which they were now debating. His opponent devoted three parts of his address to pointing out what an enormous burden the payment of over 600 Members of Parliament would be, and he lost the election by nearly 4,000 votes. He thought that was a sufficient answer to the remarks of his hon. friend. He understood that lawyers were great sticklers for precedent, and yet the hon. Member for Wandsworth said that this Resolution presupposed that payment of Members had never occurred before. That was not true, because payment of Members had existed and would exist again. ["Not by the State."] At any rate, at one time the State compelled the constituencies to pay, and this proposal was merely an alteration in the method of collection. What did it matter whether the constituency paid the Member direct, or through the revenue of the country in the ordinary way? It had been said that if they were paid, hon. Members might sit here for the purposes of receiving salaries.

MR. CROOKS (Woolwich): The Members of the late Government did that.

*MR. J. WARD said he did not desire to draw comparisons, but he thought that if the last President of the Local Government Board was worth £2,000 the present one was worth £20,000. He supported this Resolution because it would broaden the basis of representation. Once they had decided that this country should be governed by a democracy they could not limit it. They might try to curb it and put it down here or set it back there, but sooner or later they would be bound to admit the people to equal privileges in administering the affairs of this country. They could not have equal privileges so long as some were extremely wealthy and some were poor, unless some other steps were taken to make up for that inequality. That was exactly the position of the Labour Party. It was the duty of this House, after the verdict of the constituencies, to put that verdict into shape and practice by adopting this Resolution.

*SIR EDWARD CLARKE (City of London) regretted that the inconvenient arrangements of the House compelled the discussion of a question of these dimensions in an inadequate space of time, but he would put succinctly the reasons which induced him to give definite and consistent opposition to a proposal which, in his opinion, was an entirely idle and ineffective one. In the course of the twenty years during which he had had the privilege of serving in this House he had heard a good many abstract Resolutions moved, but he had never heard one which was so absolutely unpractical as that which was now before the House. If translated into a Bill or a Vote in Supply, no Member could vote for it because of the clear rule that no Member should vote upon a Motion in which he was personally interested. If the Government were to propose a Resolution in Committee in favour of a vote of £300 to each of the present Members of the House, there would not be a Member who would not commit a breach of order if he voted for it and would not be liable to have his vote disallowed. This was a perfectly altruistic Motion, and there was only one way in which the House could adopt it. He had drafted the words in which it would have to be done. They were:—"That every Member elected after this date shall be entitled to receive an annual payment of £300 provided he shall not have been a Member of the House at the time of the passing of this Resolution." According to the absolute and unbroken and essential rule of purity in that House, it would be impossible for the Members who were now in the House to vote to themselves, out of public moneys, £300, £500, or any other sum of money. Therefore, this became a perfectly ideal and altruistic Motion. He agreed that the amount proposed in the Resolution was a moderate one; but it came to £210,000 a year, and that would be a permanent charge; £210,000 was the interest upon £7,000,000, and the House was really called upon to vote in favour of the establishment of a permanent charge which amounted to a capital charge of

£7,000,000 upon the country. Last night the House decided to throw upon the resources of the country a charge of £50,000 or £60,000 a year. That was another £2,000,000 in capital sum. So that this House of Commons, which had come here resolute in its determination to effect economies, was beginning by placing upon the nation a capital charge of nine millions of money, the annual interest upon which was to go practically into their own pockets. When the right hon. Gentleman the Member for East Fife was speaking on this matter on March 29th, 1899, he said—

> "The total charge involved would be about £250,000 a year. That sum might very easily be obtained without imposing any additional taxation. A small charge like this could be met by rearranging official salaries upon a more moderate and reasonable scale, by reducing the ornamental sinecures, and by curtailing the grossly unreasonable pension and superannuation system."

That right hon. Gentleman was now Chancellor of the Exchequer, and he wondered whether he was going to begin with the salaries, or with the sinecures, or whether he thought it would be very easy to interfere with pensions and superannuations which had been earned and granted under Acts of Parliament? He thought he had shown that this was a very serious thing from the point of view of finance, but there was another consideration. No one had ever heard him use the thin-end-of-the-wedge argument. If a thing was right they ought to do it. But the principle on which this Motion was based ought, if adopted at all, to be applied consistently. He agreed that Members of Parliament discharged duties of the highest importance, and many of them discharged those duties at large expense to themselves. But there were other large classes of persons who discharged most useful offices, which did not carry with them the social distinction which was part of the reward of hon. Members of that House. County councils borough councils, boards of guardians, county and borough magistrates, and members of Royal Commissions did good service to the State. The fact was that this country was happy in having an enormous amount of most valuable public service done for it by unpaid persons. He thought it would not be decent, it would scarcely be honest, for the Members of this House, having the control of the national purse, to take out of that purse £300 a year for each of themselves, and leave these less dignified servants of the State to do their work in these other capacities without any payment at all. Supposing this proposal—even if it were practical, and it was not—were adopted, what would be the result? That whenever there was a vacancy in a constituency they would offer for public competition an office which was paid for at the rate of £300 a year and which carried with it a great deal of social distinction, and possibly a good deal of business influence and value. There would be no entrance fee, and when the candidate had been nominated by ten members of the electorate, the country would pay the whole of the official expenses of the competition. That was a dangerous outlook. He believed that one absolutely universal failing of mankind was vanity; and when they had vanity and a chance of £300 a year he thought they would find plenty of candidates at the elections. It had been stated more than once that some check would be needed. The hon. Member for the Wansbeck Division, with a courage which they all admired, had again and again pressed this question on the attention of the House, and if anybody was entitled to any credit for this Motion it was the hon. Member for the Wansbeck Division, who in 1892 said in regard to a similar proposal—

> "If this proposal were adopted, I think it would be necessary to take some precautions against bogus candidates being started at the time of the election, and he suggested that there should be a deposit required to be returned if the candidate got a certain percentage of votes, and that there should be a second ballot."

He did not say anything against those precautions, but they certainly would be precautions against the danger which this plan would set up. The reason which had been stated again and again for bringing forward this proposal was that it was not considered possible without it to send to this House a sufficiently large number of representatives of the great labour organisations of this country. But that reason had passed away. A good many of them were here. [AN HON. MEMBER: A few of them] A good many of them.

They were sent here as men who were well-known and trusted by the great organisations of labour in this country, which, with very little sacrifice indeed, could make provision for the maintenance of their representatives in this House. He confessed he should have thought it would have been more congenial to the Labour Members to be sustained in their position in that House by the free will offerings of their great trade organisations than by the reluctant payment of a tax imposed upon the whole country. He said the reluctant payment because he believed this proposal was unpopular in the constituencies. There were some instances where the matter had been put before the constituency; but he doubted whether there were half a dozen Members on the Ministerial side who in their election addresses or speeches told their constituents that they were going to propose that £300 a year should be paid to them. He knew that the Government with its great majority could pass a Bill on this matter; and if the guardians of the public purse chose to help themselves out of it, the other House would not interfere, and it would be too late for the constituencies to interfere. But there was another consideration. There was another special body in that House seriously affected by this matter—the Nationalist Members for Ireland eighty-two in number. The effect of this proposal if carried out would be to endow that Party to the extent of £24,000 a year. That proposal he would absolutely resist to the last. It was not a loyal Party.

MR. JOYCE (Limerick): Loyal to Ireland.

*SIR EDWARD CLARKE said if he were to single out one Member of that Party and say he was a loyalist he would ruin his political future. It was a Party which had declared again and again that it was here, not to help the deliberations and work of Parliament, but to hinder them. It might be right or wrong that they should make that claim, but it had been made with unflinching frankness by the hon. and learned Member for Waterford in this House only in April last. It was that Party which the Government, if they accepted this proposal, would be assisting and endowing with £24,000 a year. These were reasons why he objected to this proposal, and on all grounds he would resist it. First, it would be an expenditure of public money which was quite unnecessary. Secondly, they were the trustees for the constituencies. [Laughter.] Who laughed at that? Why every Member of Parliament who came here had the right to give his vote on the question of the salary of a Minister or the payment of men in the dockyards was a trustee. It was not his own money with which he was dealing, and which he had a right to give away at his will and pleasure. He had only a right as trustee to deal with the public money; as trustees they had no right to take the trust funds and put them in their own pockets without, at all events, consulting and getting the consent of the persons to whom the money belonged. Then, again, they ought not to select themselves as the persons to receive this payment. He should be the more reluctant to do it, because it was obvious that the adoption of the proposal would not only be a breach of trust but would add to the difficulties of their electoral organisation and the discharge of their Parliamentary duties.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN, Stirling Burghs): It is not my desire to occupy much of the time of the House, and there is not much time left for me to occupy. But, little as that may amount to, I will spare a moment or two of it to express the gladness with which we welcome back to the House the hon. and learned Gentleman who has just sat down. There were a great many of us who admired the manly consistency which led to his absence, and we welcome him back to an arena in which, I think, he is much wanted. Although he hits pretty hard, and went entirely out of his way just now to discharge his darts against hon. Members from Ireland, it is a pleasure to see him taking part in our debates again. But I was astonished to see him make his *début* in our debates by adopting an extraordinary argument used by the hon. Member for Wandsworth. I am not equal to the task of chopping law or logic with the hon. and learned Gentleman. Heaven forbid! He said it would be an impossibility for us, in accordance with constitutional rule, to act on such a Resolution as this; that it would be a breach of trust, that it would be putting our hands into other people's pockets. If that is the deadlock to which he reduces us, will he tell me how this system came to be adopted through all the British Colonies? Were they all guilty of this felony? How in the world have they managed to introduce the payment of Members? The hon. and learned Gentleman, I should have hoped, would have thought Imperially on this subject. But what is the value of the argument to a plain man and no lawyer like myself? When you talk of a Member's not being allowed to vote for anything conducing to his personal interest, the interest that is meant is his personal interest as a private individual, and not as a Member of this House. To carry out a policy of which he and a great many others approve, and which they think will redound to the public interest—namely, enlarging the scope of the choice of the electors and improving in other ways the position of the representatives of the people—that is not personal interest. If it is, is the hon. and learned Gentleman himself quite free? Did he ever vote for his own salary?

SIR EDWARD CLARKE: I think I may say I never did, and I would not have thought of doing so.

Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The probability is that the hon. and learned Gentleman paired for the night. Let me have a home-thrust at this new champion of economy. He spoke of the idea that, if this were to be done, it might be done by the arranging of official salaries. All that I can say is that there is no official salary so capable of arrangement as was the salary of the Solicitor-General in his time. If we are to proceed on this suggestion, then of course we may expect to receive conscience money from the hon. and learned Gentleman. He spoke of the thin edge of the wedge. He used the argument, but said that he had no opinion of it. I remember Sir William Harcourt once said to me, when he heard a Member objecting to the thin end of the wedge—

> "I wonder if anyone ever thought of beginning with the thick end of the wedge."

So scrupulous is the hon. and learned Gentleman that the thick end of the wedge is the one which he prefers to use.

I come to much more serious business, and that is to state the view which I and the Government take. I am cordially in agreement with the principle of the Resolution, but it does not follow that it is on all occasions opportune to carry it into effect. In saying this I am only repeating what has been said on behalf of previous Liberal Governments in very plain terms. In 1893 a Motion of this sort was brought forward proposing, not a definite sum, but a reasonable allowance, and Sir William Harcourt, standing where I am, said that he accepted the Resolution, to be carried out as soon as possible, when we had at our disposal the time and the money which were necessary. In 1895 the same Motion was repeated, and Sir William Harcourt again said that it was a question of time and money. Again, last year the same question was raised on the Motion of the hon. Member for the Wansbeck Division, and we supported it—I supported it, at any rate. That was a Motion for a reasonable stipend during a Member's Parliamentary life. It is rather an unpleasant way of putting it; no one likes to be reminded that he is mortal. But that was the state of things ten years ago. Has it improved? No, Sir; it is much worse. The impediment and want of money is much greater than it was then. The late Government have taken care of that. And now, why do I, and I think most of my hon. friends, if not all of them, agree with this Resolution? What, after all, is the object of our whole system of registration and of voting, from one end to the other. It is to obtain a genuine and straightforward representation of the people. And do we obtain that object now when the first question applied to a candidate, not openly, but behind the scenes, no doubt, is not, "Are you a man of sufficient character, ability, and sound sense to represent this constituency?" but, "Have you money enough either of your own, or derived from some other source, to meet the public expense of maintaining yourself in the discharge of your duties in attendance upon the House?" I believe that that is a most mischievous state of things. I conceive that the giving of a small allowance to a Member of Parliament, sufficient for his subsistence—and the difference, of course between this and other assemblies, such as boards of guardians and those to which the hon. Gentlemen referred, where excellent public work is done, is that there is no expense involved in their membership. It does not take members away from their homes and interrupt their daily lives. But the question is, what would be the advantage if this impediment in the way of a candidate were removed? In the first place there would be a free choice open to the constituency, which surely comes to something. Secondly, I maintain that under the present system—whether due to that system or not I cannot wholly say—but too often, I believe, the relations between constituents and Members are perverted. The idea pervading men's minds is that a constituency is doing the Member a favour by returning him to Parliament. It ought to be exactly the reverse. The candidate is doing the constituents a favour by undertaking arduous, difficult, and often tiresome work for them; and until you get that balance readjusted I believe you will not remedy many of those evils from which we are suffering. Why is it that Members are so overwhelmed in some places by demands for subscriptions? It is because the constituencies look upon him as a man who has received a great benefit from them, and they hold that he ought to give a return. The whole of that conception of the relations between a Member and his constituents is entirely wrong. Then I hold that, if every Member of this House had this small sum to cover the extra expenses he is put to by living in London, it would, so far from debasing, exalt his feelings of independence. He would no longer feel that he had to look to any one to maintain him in the position in which he stood. The burden of proof in this case rests upon those who would refuse a moderate payment to Members. We hear of the professional politician. What do you mean by a professional politician? If you take a man who devotes himself to his work, to the study of public affairs, in order to qualify himself here, and contrast with him a man who comes here as a pastime or a means of social advancement, which of the two is the better man? Have there not been in past Parliaments men who, quite independently of money, have had some purpose—a trade purpose or some other purpose peculiar to themselves, perhaps, or shared by others—to serve by their presence and action here?

I concur with Sir William Harcourt when he said that he had neither the time nor the money. No more have I. The policy upon which the Government have taken office and upon which they have been supported by their friends is the policy of retrenchment. [OPPOSITION cheers.] I am glad to hear that policy is so popular with those on the benches opposite. It is wonderful what a good dip in the brine of a general election does. There were no cheers from those Gentlemen last year for economy and retrenchment when Lord St. Aldwyn used to read his little homilies upon the necessity of stopping our extravagance. But now we are all for retrenchment. I am glad to hear it. It is not so easy to check the flow of expenditure. Still less easy is it to divert and bring it back to proper channels. But at this moment, when we are beginning to tackle this great question of expenditure and of retrenchment, it would be most inopportune for me to make any promise of action on this subject, because it would be an action which in my conscience I could not see any way of fulfilling at the time. We must wait until retrenchment and a wiser and more sober spirit in the people as well as in this House enables us to have funds in hand whereby we can effect this, as I consider, material improvement, and introduce that which would be a beneficial system in the best interests of the country.

*MR. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford) said the Irish Party, to which the hon. and learned Member for the City of London had referred, would vote in favour of this Resolution, and for twenty-five years they had consistently voted for every popular reform. They would do so because they believed the suggested reform was in the interest of the democracy of Great Britain. The Irish Party had, however, never asked payment for their own services; they had never put forward this claim; they were content to be supported by the voluntary contributions of their own countrymen. If it would ease the conscience of the Unionist who drew a distinction between Irish and English Members in this House, the Irish were quite willing to be excluded altogether from this payment. They did not ask for it, and did not want it.

SIR HENRY KIMBER asked leave to withdraw his Amendment so as to take the decision by one vote, but leave was refused.

Question put.

The House divided :—Ayes, 363 ; Noes, 110. (Division List No. 5.)

AYES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
Abraham, William (Rhondda)
Acland, Francis Dyke
Adkins, W. Ryland
Agar-Robartes, Hon. T. C.
Agnew, George William
Ainsworth, John Stirling
Alden, Percy
Allen, A. Acland (Christchurch
Astbury, John Meir
Atherley-Jones, L.
Baker, Sir John (Portsmouth)
Baker, Joseph A. (Finsbury, E.)
Balfour, Robert (Lanark)
Baring, Godfrey (Isle of Wight
Barker, John
Barlow, John E. (Somerset)
Barlow, Percy (Bedford)
Barnard, E. B.
Barnes, G. N.
Barran, Rowland Hirst
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Beale, W. P.
Beauchamp, E.
Beaumont, W. C. B. (Hexham)
Beck, A. Cecil
Bell, Richard
Bellairs, Carlyon
Benn, Jn. Williams (Devonport)
Bennett, E. N.
Berridge, T. H. D.
Bethell, J. H. (Essex, Romford)
Billson, Alfred
Birrell, Rt. Hon. Augustine
Black, Arthur W. (Bedfordshire
Bolton, T. D. (Derbyshire, N.E.
Boulton, A. C. F. (Ramsey)
Bowerman, C. W.
Brace, William
Bramsdon, T. A.
Branch, James
Brigg, John
Broadhurst, Henry
Brooke, Stopford
Brunner, J. F. L. (Lancs, Leigh)
Buckmaster, Stanley O.
Burke, E. Haviland-
Burns, Rt. Hon. John
Burnyeat, J. D. W.
Burt, Rt. Hon. Thomas
Buxton, Rt. Hn. Sydney Charles
Byles, William Pollard
Cairns, Thomas
Caldwell, James
Cameron, Robert
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H.
Carr-Gomm, H. W.
Causton, Rt. Hn Richard Knight
Cawley, Frederick
Chance, Frederick William
Channing, Francis Allston
Cheetham, John Frederick
Cherry, R. R.
Churchill, Winston Spencer
Clarke, C. Goddard (Peckham)
Cleland, J. W.
Clough, W.
Clynes, J.
Cobbold, Felix Thornley
Cogan, Denis J.
Collins, Stephen (Lambeth)
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Cooper, G. J.
Corbett, C H. (Sussex, E. Grins'd
Cornwall, Sir Edwin A.

Cory, Clifford John
Cotton, Sir H. J. S.
Craig, Herbert J. (Tynemouth)
Crean, Eugene
Cremer, William Randall
Crooks, William
Crosfield, A. H.
Crossley, William J.
Cullinan, J.
Dalziel, James Henry
Davies,David(MontgomeryCo.
Davies, Timothy (Fulham)
Davis, W. Howell (Bristol,S.)
Delany, William
Devlin,Chas.Ramsay(Galway)
Dewar, Arthur (Edinburgh, S.)
Dewar, John A. Inverness-sh.)
Dickinson,W.H.(St.PancrasN
Dilke, Rt. Hn. Sir Charles
Dobson, Thomas W.
Dolan, Charles Joseph
Donelan, Captain A.
Duckworth, James
Duffy, William, J.
Duncan,C.(Barrow-in-Furness
Duncan, J. H. (York, Otley)
Dunn, A. Edward (Camborne)
Edwards, Clements (Denbigh)
Edwards, Enoch (Hanley)
Esmonde, Sir Thomas
Essex, R. W.
Evans, Samuel, T.
Eve, Harry Trelawney
Everett, R. Lacy
Fenwick, Charles
Fiennes, Hon. Eustace
Findlay, Alexander
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Flynn, James Christopher
Foster, Rt. Hon. Sir Walter
Fowler, Rt. Hon. Sir Henry
Fuller, J. M. F.
Fullerton, Hugh
Furness, Sir Christopher
Gardner,Col.A.(Herefordsh.S.
Gibb, James (Harrow)
Gilhooly, James
Gill, A. H.
Ginnell, L.
Gladstone,Rt.HnHerbertJohn
Glendinning, R. G.
Glover, Thomas
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Grant, Corrie
Greenwood, G. (Peterborough)
Greenwood, Hamar (York)
Grey, Rt. Hon. Sir Edward
Grove, Archibald
Gulland, John W.
Haldane, Rt. Hon. Richard B.
Hall, Frederick
Halpin, J.
Hammond, John
Harcourt, Rt. Hon. Lewis
Hardie,J.Keir(MerthyrTydvil
Hardy, George A. (Suffolk)
Harmsworth, Cecil B. (Worc'r)
Harmsworth,RL(Caithness-sh
Harvey, H. G. C. (Rochdale)
Harwood, George
Haslam,James (Derbyshire)
Healy, Timothy Michael
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Henderson,J.M.(Aberdeen,W.
Henry, Charles S.

Herbert, ColonelIvor(Mon.,S.)
Higham, John Sharp
Hobart, Sir Robert
Hobhouse, Charles E. H.
Hodge, John
Hogan, Michael
Holden, E. Hopkinson
Holland, Sir William Henry
Hooper, A. G.
Horridge, Thomas Gardiner
Howard, Hon. Geoffrey
Hudson, Walter
Hutton, Alfred Eddison
Hyde, Clarendon
Illingworth, Percy H.
Isaacs, Rufus Daniel
Jackson, R. S.
Jardine, Sir J.
Jenkins, J.
Johnson, W. (Nuneaton)
Jones,DavidBrynmor(Swansea
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Jones,William(Carnarvonshire
Jowett, F. W.
Joyce, Michael
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kelly, George D.
Kennedy, Vincent Paul
Kilbride, Denis
Kitson, Sir James
Laidlaw, Robert
Law, Hugh Alexander
Lawson, Sir Wilfred
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Lea, HughCecil(St.Pancras,E.
Leese,Sir JosephF.(Accrington
Lehmann, R. C.
Lever,A.Levy(Essex,Harwich)
Lewis, John Herbert
Lough, Thomas
Lundon, W.
Lynch, H. B.
Macdonald, J. R. (Leicester)
Macdonald,J.M.(FalkirkB'ghs
Mackarness, Frederick C.
Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
Macpherson, J. T.
MacVeagh,Jeremiah(Down,S.)
MacVeigh,Charles(Donegal,E)
M'Callum, John M.
M'Crae, George
M'Kean, John
M'Kenna, Reginald
M'Killop, W.
M'Laren, Sir C. B. (Leicester)
M'Micking, Major G.
Maddison, Frederick
Mallett, Charles E.
Markham. Arthur Basil
Marks, G.Croydon(Launcestn)
Marnham, F. J.
Mason, A. E. W. (Coventry)
Massie, J.
Masterman, C. F. G.
Meehan, Patrick, A.
Menzies, Walter
Mond, A.
Money, L. G. Chiozza-
Montagu, E. S.
Mooney, J. J.
Morgan, G. Hay (Cornwall)
Morley, Rt. Hon. John
Morrell, Philip
Murphy, John

Murray, James
Nicholls, George
Nolan, Joseph
Norman, Henry
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
Nussey, Thomas Willans
Nuttall, Harry
O'Brien,Kendal(TipperaryMid
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Brien, William (Cork)
O'Connor,James(Wicklow,W.)
O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
O'Doherty, Philip
O'Donnell, C. J. (Walworth)
O'Dowd, John
O'Grady, J.
O'Kelly, Conor (Mayo, N.)
O'Kelly,James(Roscommon,N.
O'Malley, William
O'Mara, James
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
O'Shee, James John
Parker, James (Halifax)
Paul, Herbert
Pearce, Robert (Staffs, Leek)
Pease, J. A. (Saffron Walden)
Philipps,Col.Ivor(South'mpt'n
Philipps, Owen C. (Pembroke)
Pickersgill, Edward Hare
Pollard, Dr.
Price, C. E.(Edinb'gh,Central)
Price, Robert John(Norfolk,E)
Priestley, Arthur (Grantham)
Priestley,W.E.B.(Bradford,E.
Radford, G. H.
Rainy, A. Rolland
Raphael, Herbert H.
Rea, Russell (Gloucester)
Rea, WalterRussell(Scarboro')
Redmond, John E. Waterford)
Redmond, William (Clare)
Rees, J. D.
Rendall, Athelstan
Renton, Major Leslie
Richards,Thomas(W.Monm'th
Richards,T.F(Wolverhampton
Richardson, A.
Ridsdale, E. A.
Roberts, Charles H. (Lincoln)
Roberts, G. H. (Norwich)
Robertson, J. M. (Tyneside)
Robertson,SirGScott(Bradford
Robinson, S.
Robson, Sir William Snowdon
Roche, Augustine (Cork)
Roche, John (Galway, East)
Rogers, F. E. Newman
Rose, Charles Day
Rowlands, J.
Runciman, Walter
Rutherford, V. H. (Brentford)
Rutherford, W.W. (Liverpool)
Samuel,Herbert L.(Cleveland)
Samuel, S. M. (Whitechapel)
Scarisbrick, T. T. L.
Schwann, C. Duncan (Hyde)
Schwann,Chas.E.(Manch'ster)
Scott,A.H(Ashton under Lyne
Sears, J. E.
Seaverns, J. H.
Seddon, J.
Seely, Major J. B.
Shackleton, David James
Shaw, Charles Edw. (Stafford)

Shaw, Rt. Hon. T.(Hawick B.)
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Silcock, Thomas Ball
Simon, John Allsebrook
Sinclair, Rt. Hon. John
Sloan, Thomas Henry
Smyth, Thomas (Leitrim, S.)
Snowden, P.
Spicer, Albert
Stranger, H. Y.
Stanley, Hn. A. Lyulph(Chesh.)
Steadman, W. C.
Stewart, Halley (Greenock)
Straus, B. S. (Mile End)
Strauss, E. A. (Abingdon)
Stuart, James (Sunderland)
Summerbell, T.
Sutherland, J. E.
Taylor, John W. (Durham)
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
Thomas, Abel (Carmarthen, E.)
Thomas, Sir A. (Glamorgan, E.)
Thomas, David Alfred(Merthyr
Thompson, J. W. H. (Somerset E
Thorne, William
Tomkinson, James
Torrance, A. M.
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Verney, F. W.
Villiers, Ernest Amherst
Wadsworth, J.
Waldron, Laurence Ambrose
Walker, H. de R. (Leicester)
Walters, John Tudor
Walton, Sir John L. (Leeds, S.)
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
Ward, John(Stoke upon Trent
Wardle, George J.
Wason, Eugene(Clackmannan)
Wason, John Cathcart(Orkney)
Waterlow, D. S.
Watt, H. Anderson
Wedgwood, Josiah C.
Weir, James Galloway
White, George (Norfolk)
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
White, J. D. (Dumbartonshire)
Whitehead, Rowland
Whiteley, George(York, W. R.)
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Wiles, Thomas
Williams, J. (Glamorgan)
Wilson, C. H. W. (Hull, W.)
Wilson, Henry, J. (York, W. R.)
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid)
Wilson, J. W. (Worcestersh. N.)
Wilson, W. T. (Westhoughton)
Winfrey, R.
Wood, T. M'Kinnon
Woodhouse, Sir J T(Huddersf'd
Young, Samuel

TELLERS FOR THE AYES.—Mr. William Lever and Mr. Vivian.

NOES.

Acland-Hood Rt Hn Sir Alex. F.
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Anstruther-Gray, Major
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster, Rt Hn Hugh O.
Ashley, W. W.
Aubrey-Fletcher, Rt. Hn. Sir H.
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Capt. C. B. (Hornsey)
Banner, John S. Harmood
Baring, Hon. Guy (Winchester)
Barrie, H. T. (Londonderry, N.)
Beach, Hn. Michael Hugh Hicks
Beckett, Hon. Gervase
Bowles, G. Stewart
Boyle, Sir Edward
Bridgeman, W. Clive
Brotherton, Edward Allen
Bull, Sir William James
Burdett-Coutts, W.
Butcher, Samuel Henry
Campbell J. H. M. (Dublin Univ.
Carlile, E. Hildred
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Castlereagh, Viscount
Cave, George
Cavendish, Rt. Hn. Victor C. W.
Cecil, Lord J. P. J. (Stamford)
Cecil, Lord R. (Marylebone E.)
Chamberlain Rt Hn J. A. (Worc.
Clarke Sir Edward (City London
Coates, E. Feetham (Lewisham)
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North
Courthope, G. Loyd
Craik, Sir Henry
Cross, Alexander
Dalrymple, Viscount
Dixon, Sir Daniel
Dixon-Hartland Sir Fred Dixon
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Du Cros, Harvey
Duncan, Robert(Lanark, Govan
Faber, George Denison (York)
Fardell, Sir T. George
Fell, Arthur
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Forster, Henry William
Gibbs, G. A. (Bristol, West)
Gordon, J. (Londonderry, S.)
Haddock, George R.
Hambro, Charles Eric
Hamilton, Marquess of
Hardy, Laurence(Kent Ashford
Harrison-Broadley, Col. H. B.
Haworth, Arthur A.
Helmsley, Viscount
Hervey, F. W. F. (Bury S Edmd's
Hill, Henry Stavely (Staff'sh.)
Hills, J. W.
Houston, Robert Paterson
Hunt, Rowland
Kennaway, Rt. Hon. Sir John H.
Kenyon-Slaney, Rt. Hn. Col. W.
Keswick, William
Lane-Fox, G. R.
Lee, Arthur H. (Hants Fareham
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Liddell, Henry
Long, Rt. Hn. Walter(Dublin S.
Lowe, Sir Francis William
Magnus, Sir Philip
Marks, Harry Hananel (Kent)
Meysey-Thompson, Major E. C.
Mildmay, Francis Bingham
Morpeth, Viscount
Nield, Herbert
Parkes, Ebenezer
Pease Herbert Pike(Darlington
Percy, Earl
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Ratcliff, Major R. F.
Rawlinson, John Frederick P.
Remnant, James Farquharson
Roberts, S. (Sheffield Ecclesall
Rutherford, John (Lancashire)
Sandys, Lieut.-Col. Thos. Myles
Scott, Sir S. (Marylebone, W.)
Smith, Abel H. (Hertford, East)
Smith, F. E. (Liverpool Walton)
Stanley, Hn. Arthur(Ormskirk
Starkey, John R.
Stone, Sir Benjamin
Sullivan, Donal
Talbot, Rt. Hn. J. G. (Oxf'd Univ.
Tennant, E. P. (Salisbury)
Thomson, W. Mitchell-(Lanark
Thornton, Percy M.
Turnour, Viscount
Valentia, Viscount
Vincent, Col. Sir C. E. Howard
Walrond, Hon. Lionel
Ward W Dudley(Southampton
Whitbread, Howard
Williamson, G. H. (Worcester)
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Wilson, A. Stanley(York, E. R.)
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart-
Younger, George

TELLERS FOR THE NOES.—Sir Henry Kimber and Mr. Evelyn Cecil.

Main Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 348; Noes, 110. (Division List No. 6.)

AYES.

Abraham, William(Cork, N.E.)
Abraham, William (Rhondda)
Acland, Francis Dyke
Adkins, W. Ryland
Agar-Robartes, Hon. T. C.
Agnew, George William

Ainsworth, John Stirling
Alden, Percy
Allen,A. Acland(Christchurch)
Astbury, John Meir
Atherly-Jones, L.
Baker, Sir John (Portsmouth)
Balfour, Robert (Lanark)
Baring,Godfrey(Isle of Wight)
Barker, John
Barlow, John E. (Somerset)
Barnard, E. B.
Barnes, G. N.
Barran, Rowland Hirst
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Beale, W. P.
Beauchamp, E.
Beaumont, W. C. B. (Hexham)
Beck, A. Cecil
Bell, Richard
Bellairs, Carlyon
Benn,JohnWilliams(Devonp'rt
Bennett, E. N.
Berridge, T. H. D.
Bethell, J.H. (Essex, Romford)
Billson, Alfred
Birrell, Rt. Hon. Augustine
Black,Arthur W.(Bedfordshire
Bolton,T.D.(Derbyshire,N.E.)
Boulton, A. C. F. (Ramsey)
Bowerman, C. W.
Brace, William
Bramsdon, T. A.
Brigg, John
Broadhurst, Henry
Brooke, Stopford
Brunner, J.F.L. (Lancs.,Leigh)
Buckmaster, Stanley O.
Burke, E. Haviland-
Burns, Rt. Hon. John
Burnyeat, J. D. W.
Burt, Rt. Hon. Thomas
Buxton,Rt.Hn.SydneyCharles
Byles, William Pollard
Cairns, Thomas
Caldwell, James
Cameron, Robert
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H.
Carr-Gomm, H. W.
Causton,Rt.Hn.RichardKnight
Cawley, Frederick
Chance, Frederick William
Channing, Francis Allston
Cheetham, John Frederick
Cherry, R. R
Churchill, Winston Spencer
Clarke, C. Goddard (Peckham)
Cleland, J. W.
Clough, W.
Clynes, J.
Cobbold, Felix Thornley
Cogan, Denis J.
Collins, Stephen (Lambeth)
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Cooper, G. J.
Corbett,C H(Sussex,E.Grinst'd
Cornwall, Sir Edwin A.
Cotton, Sir H. J. S.
Craig, Herbert J. (Tynemouth)
Crean, Eugene
Cremer, William Randal
Crooks, William
Crosfield, A. H.
Crossley, William J.
Cullinan, J.
Dalziel, James Henry
Davies, Timothy (Fulham)
Davis, W. Howell (Bristol,S.)
Delany, William
DevlinCharlesRamsay(Galway
Dewar, Arthur (Edinburgh, S)
Dewar, John A. (Inverness-sh.
Dickinson,WH(St.Pancras,N.
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Dobson, Thomas W.
Dolan, Charles Joseph
Donelan, Captain A.
Duckworth, James
Duffy, William J.
Duncan, C.(Barrow-in-Furness
Duncan, J. H. (York, Otley)
Dunn, A. Edward (Camborne)
Edwards, Clement (Denbigh)
Edwards, Enoch (Hanley)
Evans, Samuel T.
Eve, Harry Trelawney
Everett, R. Lacey
Fenwick, Charles
Fiennes, Hon. Eustace
Findlay, Alexander
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Flynn, James Christopher
Foster, Rt. Hon. Sir Walter
Fowler, Rt. Hon. Sir Henry
Fullerton, Hugh
Gibb, James (Harrow)
Gilhooly, James
Gill, A. H.
Ginnell, L.
Gladstone,Rt.HnHerbertJohn
Glendinning, R. G.
Glover, Thomas
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Grant, Corrie
Greenwood, G. (Peterborough)
Greenwood, Hamar (York)
Grey, Rt. Hon. Sir Edward
Grove, Archibald
Gulland, John W.
Haldane, Rt. Hon. Richard B.
Hall, Frederick
Halpin, J.
Hammond, John
Harcourt, Rt. Hon. Lewis
Hardie,J.Keir(Merthyr Tydvil
Harmsworth, Cecil B. (Worc'r)
Harmsworth,R.L(Caithn'ss-sh
Harvey, A. G. C. (Rochdale)
Harwood, George
Haslam, James (Derbyshire)
Healy, Timothy Michael
Henderson, Arthur (Durham
Henderson,J.M.(Aberdeen,W.
Henry, Charles S.
Herbert, Colonel Ivor (Mon. S.)
Higham, John Sharp
Hobart, Sir Robert
Hodge, John
Hogan, Michael
Holden, E. Hopkinson
Holland, Sir William Henry
Hooper, A. G.
Horridge, Thomas Gardiner
Howard, Hon. Geoffrey
Hudson, Walter
Hutton, Alfred Eddison
Hyde, Clarendon
Illingworth, Percy H.
Isaacs, Rufus Daniel
Jardine, Sir J.
Jenkins, J.
Johnson, W. (Nuneaton)
Jones,DavidBrynmor(Swansea
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Jones,William(Carnarvonshire
Jowett, F. W.
Joyce, Michael
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kelley, George D.
Kennedy, Vincent Paul
Kilbride, Denis
Kitson, Sir James
Law, Hugh Alexander
Lawson, Sir Wilfred
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Lea,Hugh Cecil(St.Pancras,E.
Leese,SirJosephF.(Accrington
Lehmann, R. C.
Lever,A.Levy(Essex, Harwich
Lewis, John Herbert
Lough, Thomas
Lundon, W.
Lynch, H. B.
Macdonald, J. R. (Leicester)
Macdonald,J M.(FalkirkB'ghs
Mackarness, Frederic C.
Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
Macpherson, J. T.
MacVeagh, Jeremiah(Down,S.
MacVeigh,Charles(Donegal,E)
M'Callum, John M.
M'Crae, George
M'Kean, John
M'Kenna, Reginald
M'Killop, W.
M'Laren, Sir C. B. (Leicester)
M'Micking, Major G.
Maddison, Frederick
Mallet, Charles E.
Markham, Arthur Basil
Marks,GCroydon(Launceston)
Marnham, F. J.
Mason, A. E. W. (Coventry)
Massie, J.
Masterman, C. F. G.
Meehan, Patrick A.
Menzies, Walter
Mond, A.
Money, L. G. Chiozza-
Montagu, E. S.
Mooney, J. J.
Morgan, G. Hay (Cornwall)
Morrell, Philip
Murphy, John
Murray, James
Nicholls, George
Nolan, Joseph
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
Nussey, Thomas Willans
Nuttall, Harry
O'Brien,Kendal(TipperaryMid
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Brien William (Cork)
O'Connor,James(Wicklow,W.
O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
O'Doherty, Philip
O'Donnell, C. J. (Walworth)
O'Dowd, John
O'Grady, J.
O'Kelly, Conor (Mayo, N.)
O'Kelly,James(Roscommon,N

O'Malley, William
O'Mara, James
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
O'Shee, James John
Parker, James (Halifax)
Paul, Herbert
Pearce, Robert (Staffs. Leek)
Pease, J. A. (Saffron Walden)
Philipps,Col,Ivor(S'thampton)
Philipps, Owen C. (Pembroke)
Pollard, Dr.
Price, C.E. (Edinb'gh,Central)
Price,Robert John(Norfolk,E.)
Priestley, Arthur (Granthan)
Priestley,W.E.B.(Bradford,E)
Radford, G. H.
Rainy, A. Rolland
Raphael, Herbert H.
Rea, Russell (Gloucester)
Rea, Walter Russell (Scarboro'
Redmond, John E.(Waterford)
Redmond, William (Clare)
Rendall, Athelstan
Renton, Major Leslie
Richards,Thomas(W.Monm'th
Richards,T.F.(Wolverh'mpt'n
Richardson, A.
Ridsdale, E. A.
Roberts, Charles H. (Lincoln)
Roberts, G. H. (Norwich)
Robertson, J. M. (Tyneside)
Robertson SirG.Scott(Bradf'rd
Robinson, S.
Robson, Sir William Snowdon
Roche, Augustine (Cork)
Roche, John (Galway, East)
Rogers, F. E. Newman
Rose, Charles Day
Rowlands, J.
Runciman, Walter
Rutherford, V. H. (Brentford)
Rutherford, W.W. (Liverpool)
Samuel, Herbert L.(Cleveland)
Samuel, S. M. (Whitechapel)
Scarisbrick, T. T. L.
Schwann, C. Duncan (Hyde)
Schwann,Chas. E. (Manch'ster
Scott,A.H(Ashton under Lyne
Sears, J. E.
Seaverns, J. H.
Seddon, J.
Seely, Major J. B.
Shackleton, David James
Shaw, Charles Edw. (Stafford)
Shaw, Rt.Hon. T.(Hawick B.)
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Silcock, Thomas Ball
Simon, John Allsebrook
Sinclair, Rt. Hon. John
Sloan, Thomas Henry
Smyth, Thomas (Leitrim, S.)
Snowden, P.
Spicer, Albert
Stanger, H. Y.
Stanley,Hn.A.Lyulph(Chesh.)
Steadman, W. C.
Stewart, Halley (Greenock)
Straus, B. S. (Mile End)
Strauss, E. A. (Abingdon)
Stuart, James (Sunderland)
Sullivan, Donal
Summerbell, T.
Sutherland, J. E.
Taylor, John W. (Durham)
Taylor,Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
Thomas, Abel (Carmarthen E.)
Thomas, Sir A.(Glamorgan,E.)
Thomas,DavidAlfred(Merthyr
Thompson,JW.H.(Somerset,E
Thorne, William
Tomkinson, James
Torrance, A. M.
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Verney, F. W.
Villiers, Ernest Amherst
Wadsworth, J.
Wadron, Laurence Ambrose
Walker, H. De R. (Leicester)
Walters, John Tudor
Walton, Sir John L.(Leeds,S.)
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
Ward, John (Stoke upon Trent
Wardle, George J.
Wason, Eugene(Clackmannan
Wason,John Cathcart(Orkney)
Waterlow, D. S.
Watt, H. Anderson
Wedgwood, Josiah C.
Weir, James Galloway
White, George (Norfolk)
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
White, J. D.(Dumbartonshire)
Whitehead, Rowland
Whiteley, George(York,W.R.)
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Wiles, Thomas
Williams, J. (Glamorgan)
Wilson, C. H. W. (Hull, W.)
Wilson,Henry J.(York,W.R.)
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid)
Wilson,J.W.(Worcestersh.N.)
Wilson,W. T.(Westhoughton)
Winfrey, R.
Wood, T. M'Kinnon
Woodhouse,SirJ T(Huddersf'd
Young, Samuel

TELLERS FOR THE AYES.—Mr. William Lever and Mr. Vivian.

NOES.

Anson, Sir William Reynell
Anstruther-Gray, Major
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster,Rt Hn.HughO
Ashley, W. W.
Aubrey-Fletcher,Rt.Hn.SirH.
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, C. B. (Hornsey)
Banner, John S. Harmood-
Baring,Hon.Guy (Winchester)
Barrie, H. T.(Londonderry,N.)
Beach,Hn.MichaelHughHicks
Beckett, Hon. Gervase
Bowles, G. Stewart
Boyle, Sir Edward
Bridgeman, W. Clive
Brotherton, Edward Allen
Bull, Sir William James
Burdett-Coutts, W.
Butcher, Samuel Henry
Campbell,J.H.M.(DublinUniv
Carlile, E. Hildred
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Castlereagh, Viscount
Cave, George
Cavendish,Rt.Hon.VictorC W
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Cecil,Lord J. P. J. (Stamford)
Cecil,Lord R. (Marylebone,E.)
Chamberlain,RtHnJ.A.(Worc.
ClarkeSirEdward(CityLondon
Coates,E. Feetham(Lewisham)
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E
Corbett,A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Courthope, G. Loyd
Craik, Sir Henry
Cross, Alexander
Dalrymple, Viscount
Dixon, Sir Daniel
Dixon-Hartland,SirFrd.Dixon
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Du Cros, Harvey
Duncan,Robert(Lanark,Govan
Faber, George Denison (York)
Fardell, Sir T. George
Fell, Arthur
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Forster, Henry William
Gibbs, G. A. (Bristol, West)
Gordon, J. (Londonderry, S.)
Haddock, George R.
Hamilton, Marquess of
Hardy,Laurence(KentAshford
Harrison-Broadley, Col. H. B.
Haworth, Arthur A.
Helmsley, Viscount
Hervey,F.W.F(BuryS.Edm'ds
Hill, Henry Staveley
Hills, J. W,
Houston, Robert Paterson
Hunt, Rowland
Kennaway,Rt.Hon.SirJohnH.
Kenyon-Slaney,Rt.Hn.Col.W.
Keswick, William
Kimber, Sir Henry
Laidlaw, Robert
Lane-Fox, G. R.
Lee,ArthurH.(Hants.Fareham
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Liddell, Henry
Long,Rt.Hn.Walter(Dublin,S.
Lowe, Sir Francis William
Magnus, Sir Philip
Marks, Harry Hananel (Kent)
Meysey-Thompson,Major E.C.
Mildmay, Francis Bingham
Morpeth, Viscount
Nield, Herbert
Parkes, Ebenezer
PeaseHerbertPike(Darlington
Percy, Earl
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Ratcliff, Major R. F

Rawlinson, John Frederick P.
Remnant, James Farquharson
Roberts, S. (Sheffield, Ecclesall)
Rutherford, John (Lancashire)
Sandys, Lieut-Col. Thos. Myles
Scott, Sir S. (Marylebone, W.)
Smith, Abel H. (Hertford, East)
Smith, F. E. (Liverpool Walton)
Stanley, Hon Arthur (Ormskirk
Starkey, John R.
Stone, Sir Benjamin
Talbot, Rt Hn. J. G. (Oxf'd Univ.
Tennant, E. P. (Salisbury)
Thomson, W. Mitchell-(Lanark
Thornton, Percy M.
Turnour, Viscount
Vincent, Col. Sir C. E. Howard
Walrond, Hon. Lionel
Ward, W Dudley (Southampton
Whitbread, Howard
Williamson, G. H. (Worcester)
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Wilson, A. Stanley (York E. R.
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart-
Younger, George

TELLERS FOR THE NOES.—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Viscount Valentia.

Resolved, "That, in the opinion of this House, the time has now arrived when it is urgently required, in order to give to every constituency an equal, free, and unhampered selection of Parliamentary representatives, that all Members of Parliament should be paid by the State a sum at the rate of £300 per annum.—(*Mr. William Lever.*)

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (SCOTLAND) (No. 2) BILL.

Read a Second time, and committed for Monday next.

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE.

Ordered, That Mr. Snowden be discharged from the Public Accounts Committee.

Ordered, That Mr. Barnes be added to the Committee.—(*Mr. George Whiteley.*)

POLITICAL REFUGEES.

On the Motion that the House do now adjourn,

SIR WILFRID LAWSON (Cumberland, Cockermouth) said he should like to ask the Home Secretary a question in regard to the manner in which a Russian was reported to have been dealt with under the Aliens Act. It was stated in the morning newspapers that a Russian immigrant had not been allowed to land in England, and that the captain of the ship in which he came to this country had been ordered to take him back again. The history of this man was that he was a soldier in the Russian Army, that he had been ordered to fire on the Jews, that he refused and was put under arrest, that he escaped, and that, after undergoing many hardships, he shipped with his little store of money to London, thinking that he might here at least find an asylum. The report of the case stated that when the man was asked, "What will happen when you get back?" he replied, "They will shoot me." It seemed to him a horrible thing that a man coming to this country as a refugee escaping from tyranny should be compelled to return to a country where in all probability he would be shot. He asked the Home Secretary whether there was any truth in this story, and, if there was, whether he would be able to take any steps to save this man from the fate that appeared to await him. He asked further whether if there was any truth, or partial truth, in the story he would take steps to repeal one of the most infamous Acts ever passed.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. GLADSTONE, Leeds, W.) said his attention was called to the case to which his hon. friend referred, and he at once sent for particulars. The particulars which he had received were as follows—

"The appeal in this case was rejected because the man had no employment in view and no prospect of obtaining any. It was true that the immigrant's notice of appeal stated that he was a political refugee, but he himself made no mention of this fact either to the immigration officer who examined him or to the Immigration Board which heard his appeal.

Neither did he mention that he was a deserter nor that he had been arrested for refusing to fire on a Jew. On the contrary, he said that he had come to London at the invitation of a friend."

That was all the information he had. It was true, he understood, that the man returned to Bremen in the ship in which he came. If there was any truth in the story as stated by his hon. friend he took it that the Russian Government would have to apply for the man's extradition from Germany. He had made such inquiries as he could. It was one of the misfortunes in connection with the administration of the Aliens Act that cases where aliens were refused admission to the country were happening from day to day, and that he was asked for information regarding them. He did not know how long this condition of things would continue, but he was bound to say that from the point of view of administration it would be almost intolerable for the Secretary of State to be questioned in regard to every individual case. He was taking all the steps he could without any delay to impress on the authorities responsible for dealing with the immigrants what their duties were in these cases. He did not believe it was the intention of Parliament that, in enforcing the Act, cases of individual hardship should be caused under its provisions. He would do all he could to ascertain whether this man was likely to be made the subject of an application for extradition, and he would let his hon. friend know the result of his inquiry as soon as possible.

SIR WILFRID LAWSON asked whether it would not be possible to communicate with the Consulate.

*MR. LEIF JONES (Westmoreland, Appleby) said that according to the Home Secretary's statement under the operation of the Act a Russian refugee was safe in Germany unless his extradition was demanded by Russia. He doubted if this was the case. He suggested that the Home Secretary should communicate with the British Consul at Bremen.

MR. GLADSTONE said he would do so. He did not think his hon. friend had followed closely what he had quoted from the Immigration Board's Report. It was not quite clear that this man was a refugee.

*MR. LEIF JONES said his point was that if the man was a refugee he had found refuge at Bremen and not in this country.

MR. J. R. MACDONALD (Leicester) asked whether the right hon. Gentleman could tell the House who were the members of the Board who came to this decision. Could he find out why the Board decided that the man was not a political refugee? From the right hon. Gentleman's statement it was not quite clear when, where, and to whom, the allegation that the man was a political refugee was made. One part of the statement seemed to imply that it was made to the Board, while another part seemed to imply that the Board was not aware that he was a political refugee.

MR. GLADSTONE said the man stated in his notice of appeal that he was a political refugee, but he made no mention of that to the immigration officer. The Board put questions to him as to why he left Russia, and he stated that he had a friend in London who induced him to come.

The House adjourned at One o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Thursday, 8th March, 1906.

Several Lords took the Oath.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

The LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House that the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the Certificate from the Examiners that the Standing Orders applicable to the following Bill have not been complied with: West Yorkshire Tramways.

And also the Certificates that the further Standing Orders applicable to the following Bills have been complied with: Buenos Ayres Grand National Tramways [H.L.]; Great Northern (Ireland) and Midland Railways [H.L.]; Portsmouth Water [H.L.]; Kent Electric Power [H.L.]; Truro Gas [H.L.]; Shropshire, Worcestershire, and Staffordshire Electric Power [H.L.]; Cambrian Railways [H.L.]; Barry Railway [H.L.].

The same were ordered to lie on the Table.

Antofagasta (Chili) and Bolivia Railway Bill [H.L.]; Read 2ª, and committed.

Bridgewater Canals Bill [H.L.]; Read 2ª, and committed; the Committee to be proposed by the Committee of Selection.

Crystal Palace Company Bill [H.L.]; Read 2ª, and committed.

Essex and Suffolk Equitable Insurance Society Bill [H.L.]; Great Central and Lancashire, Derbyshire, and East Coast Railways Bill [H.L.]; Great Northern Railway (Ireland) Bill [H.L.]; Holyhead Water Bill [H.L.]. Read 2ª, and committed; the Committees to be proposed by the Committee of Selection.

H. R. Baines & Company Bill [H.L.]; Hull and Barnsley and Great Central Railway Companies Bill [H.L.]. Read 2ª, and committed.

Hull and Barnsley Railway (Steam Vessels) Bill [H.L.]. Read 2ª, and committed; the Committee to be proposed by the Committee of Selection.

Hull Joint Dock Bill [H.L.]; Kidderminster Gas Bill [H.L.]. Read 2ª, and committed.

London and North Western Railway Bill [H.L.]; Manchester and Milford Railway Bill [H.L.]; Maryport Harbour Bill [H.L.]; Mersey Railway Bill [H.L.]. Read 2ª, and committed; the Committees to be proposed by the Committee of Selection.

Milford Docks Bill [H.L.]; Mirfield Gas Bill [H.L.]; National Assurance Company of Ireland and Yorkshire Fire and Life Insurance Company Bill [H.L.]. Read 2ª, and committed.

Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire Tramways Bill [H.L.]; Sheffield Assay Office Bill [H.L.]; Sheffield District Railway Bill [H.L.]; South Eastern and London, Chatham, and Dover Railways Bill [H.L.]; South Lancashire Tramways (Extension of Time) Bill [H.L.]; Trent Navigation Company Bill [H.L.]; Wirral Railway (Extension of Time) Bill [H.L.]; Preston, Chorley and Horwich Tramways Bill [H.L.]. Read 2ª, and committed; the Committees to be proposed by the Committee of Selection.

Great Central and Lancashire, Derbyshire, and East Coast Railways Bill [H.L.]; Sheffield District Railway Bill [H.L.]; Manchester and Milford Railway Bill [H.L.]; Sheffield Assay Office Bill [H.L.]; Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire Tramways Bill [H.L.]; Essex and Suffolk Equitable Insurance Society Bill [H.L.]; Bridgewater Canals Bill [H.L.]; Report from the Committee of Selection, That the following Lords be proposed to the House to form the Select Committee for the consideration of the said Bills; (viz.), D. Bedford (chairman), E. Stamford, E. Hardwicke, L. Napier of Magdala, L. Sanderson; agreed to; and the said Lords appointed accordingly: The Committee to meet on Tuesday next, at Eleven o'clock; and all petitions referred to the Committee, with leave to the petitioners praying to be heard by counsel against the Bill to be heard as desired, as also counsel for the Bills.

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).

No. 3533. Turkey (Trade of Constantinople and District).

No. 3534. France (Trade of Marseilles).

AUSTRALIA.

Address from the House of Representatives and Resolution of the Senate on the subject of Home Rule for Ireland, and the replies thereto.

ROYAL UNIVERSITY OF IRELAND.

Annual Report for the year 1905.

BULGARIA (NEW CUSTOMS TARIFF) (INTERIM STATEMENT).

Translation of the New Customs Tariff of Bulgaria as modified by Commercial Conventions with the United Kingdom, Germany, France, and Italy.

Presented (by command), and ordered to lie on the Table.

WINTER ASSIZES ACT, 1876, AND SPRING ASSIZES ACT, 1879.

Two Orders in Council, dated 27th February, 1906, constituting Spring Assize Counties Nos. 2 and 3 for the ensuing Spring Assizes.

SHOP HOURS ACT, 1904.

Order made by the council of the county borough of Gateshead, and confirmed by the Secretary of State for the Home Department, fixing the hours of closing for certain shops within the borough.

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table.

NEW BILLS.

MERCHANT SHIPPING (ALIENS) BILL [H.L.].

A Bill to amend the Merchant Shipping Act, 1894. Was presented by the Lord Muskerry; read 1^a; and to be printed. (No. 24.)

POISONS AND PHARMACY BILL [H.L.].

A Bill to regulate the sale of certain poisonous substances and to amend the Pharmacy Acts. Was presented by the Lord President (*E. Crewe*); read 1^a; and to be printed. (No. 25.)

JUDICATURE BILL [H.L.].

A Bill to amend the Judicature Acts, 1873 to 1894, with respect to the persons in whom the power of making rules of court under those Acts is vested. Was presented by the Lord Chancellor; read 1^a; and to be printed. (No. 26.)

PUBLIC LIBRARIES ACTS (EXTENSION) BILL [H.L.].

A Bill to extend the Public Libraries Acts to counties. Was presented by the Lord James of Hereford; read 1^a; and to be printed. (No. 27.)

PUBLIC HEALTH ACTS (AMENDMENT) BILL [H.L.].

LORD HYLTON: My Lords, I think it due to your Lordships that I should offer an explanation with regard to the Bill for the Amendment of the Public Health Acts, the Second Reading of which stood in my name for to-day. The Local Government Board are anxious to examine the measure, and, therefore, I have deferred asking the House to read the Bill a second time until this day fortnight.

MARINE INSURANCE BILL [H.L.].

Bill read 3^a (according to order) and passed; and sent to the Commons.

PREVENTION OF CORRUPTION BILL [H.L.].

Order of the day for the Third Reading read.

Moved, that the Bill be now read 3^a—(*The Earl of Halsbury.*)

LORD JAMES OF HEREFORD: Before the Motion is put I should like to say a few words. There were, I understood, Clauses in this Bill which were under the consideration of my noble and learned friend on the Woolsack, and he certainly intimated that he would undertake the revision of some of those clauses. In my opinion, the presence of the word "corruptly" will place great difficulties in the way of enforcing the Act; and I also think that the clause which makes the permission of the Attorney-General necessary before anyone can prosecute under this Act is a very objectionable clause. My noble and learned friend in charge of the Bill is aware that the House of Commons has already opposed the Bill on the ground of the existence of that clause; and, as far as my information goes, there is every possibility, if this blot, as I think it is, on the Bill remains, that it will be again thrown out by the House of Commons. I abstained from raising the point in Committee, for I have every faith that the noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack will carry out his promise and see what Amendments can be made in the Bill. Whether these Amendments will be made in the House of Commons or not I do not know; but I hope it will not be supposed that silence on our part gave acquiescence to these objectionable provisions.

LORD AVEBURY: My Lords, I should like to say one word in support of what has fallen from the noble and learned Lord who has just sat down. The bankers are anxious that the fiat of the Attorney-General should not be necessary. There will certainly be an immense number of very small cases under the Act in which it is surely unnecessary to call in such expensive machinery, and we are very much afraid that the Act will not do all the good which the noble and learned Lord in charge of it wishes if this provision is insisted upon. We are very much obliged to the noble and learned Lord for introducing the Bill again, but we very much hope that the suggestion which has fallen from Lord James of Hereford will be acted upon.

THE EARL OF HALSBURY: My Lords, I have frequently explained to this House that my fear is that without the provision with regard to the fiat of the Attorney-General this Bill might be made a vehicle of one of the worst forms of crime that now prevails, and prevails very extensively in this country—I refer to what is commonly known as blackmail; and for that reason I did not think it right to yield to the suggestion of my noble and learned friend Lord James, when he made it last year. I am still of the same opinion. The noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack has been good enough to say that he will aid and assist the Bill as much as he can, subject to his right to make corrections. I can only say that any corrections he makes I shall be very glad to accept when this Bill comes back to this House, if it does come back; but I wish to say very distinctly that my own opinion is unchanged. I do not think the members of your Lordships House, and, indeed, the public generally, are at all aware of the extent to which that most odious form of crime—namely, blackmail—exists, and it seems to me that the new offence which you are here creating is one which will particularly lend itself to this crime unless there is some safeguard.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR (Lord LOREBURN): My Lords, I am very sorry if there has been any misunderstanding with regard to the Amendments which I intimated I intended to move. Those Amendments will be entirely free from any hostility to the Bill. I did not think it worth while making them here, as the process of the Bill would have been thereby delayed. Upon the point of the fiat of the Attorney-General being necessary, I am afraid there has been a misunderstanding. In the House of Commons I objected to the Attorney-General's fiat being required, because I thought it was an ineffective bar against the hideous crime of blackmail to which my noble friend has referred. My objection to the Attorney-General's fiat being required was that, having held that office, I knew how slight was the opportunity of the Attorney-General to inquire himself into these matters. If any more effective means could be found of preventing blackmail, which I think is a serious danger, no one would more heartily welcome it than myself.

On question, Motion agreed to.

Privileged Amendment agreed to, and Bill passed; and sent to the Commons.

WESTMINSTER BRIDGE AND THE EMBANKMENT—RETURN.

THE DUKE OF RUTLAND: My Lords, I beg leave, in accordance with the notice standing in my name on the Paper, to move for a Return showing the dates of the construction of Westminster Bridge and the Thames Embankment, the sources out of which the funds were supplied, and the public bodies to whom the execution of the work was confided.

Moved, "For a Return showing the dates of the construction of Westminster Bridge and the Thames Embankment, the sources out of which the funds were supplied, and the public bodies to whom the execution of the works was confided."—(*The Duke of Rutland*).

THE EARL OF LIVERPOOL (Lord STEWARD): My Lords, I am happy to tell my noble friend that both the Office of Works and the Treasury are prepared to grant the Return for which he moves. I believe the noble Duke has seen the Papers, but perhaps he would wish me to answer the Questions briefly for the information of the House. Firstly, with regard to Westminster Bridge, the former bridge, which I remember well, and which was in point of date the second bridge built over the Thames in the Metropolis, was built by Commissioners appointed by 9 Geo. II., c. 29, between the years 1738 and 1750. from the designs of Labelye, at a cost of £218,800, and £170,690 more was spent on the approaches to the bridge, including Great George Street. That bridge lasted rather more than 100 years. In 1846 the piers became unsafe, and the bridge was only used for a short time after that.

It is curious that it should have fallen to me to have the honour of answering this Question, for I can speak from personal recollection on these matters, having, during the earlier part of my life, lived while in London in one of the last of the old riverside houses, which no doubt the noble Duke, and many of your Lordships will recollect—Fife House. It stood on the bank of the river between Hungerford Bridge and Westminster Bridge, close to Whitehall Stairs, and on part of the site of the old Whitehall Palace, with a garden and terrace adjoining the river, and with an entrance in Middle Scotland Yard, and a garden entrance in Whitehall Yard, and the supply of coal was taken in direct from barges, so that I saw the old bridge every day of my life when in London. It had fifteen arches, and was used for traffic for some years after 1846. I well remember crossing it myself in 1854, when driving down to see the launch of H.M.S. "Royal Albert," at Woolwich Dockyard, by Her Majesty the late Queen, and it was used for some years after that. The alcoves with seats and shelters which were in the parapet of the old bridge are now in Victoria Park. I hope your Lordships will forgive this digression.

To proceed, the new Westminster Bridge was built in the following way. An Act was passed in 1853 which dissolved the body who were called the Commissioners of old Westminster Bridge. Their property was vested in the Commissioners of Her Majesty's Works, with power to sell the property and to apply the proceeds to meeting the cost of constructing the new bridge and approaches. The new bridge was thereupon begun, and it was opened on May 24th, 1862. The total cost of the new bridge and its approaches was £553,000. This was met by the sale of a portion of the estate which had been in the hands of the Commissioners of the old bridge, which produced £146,000. There were further Votes by Parliament of £407,000. The remaining portion of the estate was retained by the Government, and that included the site upon which the Home and Foreign Offices were built, valued at £235,000.

I now pass to the Thames Embankment. The Thames Embankment was constructed by the Metropolitan Board of Works under the Thames Embankment (North) Act, 1862. That, too, is a date which I could have given from my own personal knowledge, for, in consequence of the long lease of Fife House having then only some six years to run, and a renewal not being granted by the Government, who then thought of building the India Office on that site, we moved in the end of that year to the house in which I now live. That Act empowered the Board to construct an Embankment on the north side of the river between Westminster Bridge and Blackfriars Bridge, with approaches from the Strand and Whitehall, and to borrow money on the security of the coal and wine duties to pay for the works. At that time the great works of main drainage and the Embankment were regarded as of almost national importance. For that reason, under the Thames Embankment (Loans) Act, 1864, provision was made for a Treasury guarantee to enable the Board to borrow on better terms, and in connection with that guarantee the Treasury was given the management of the improvement fund. The Victoria Embankment was opened on July 13th, 1870, the Albert Embankment having been previously completed and opened on November 24th, 1869.

On Question, Motion agreed to.

SMALL HOLDINGS.

*The EARL of HARROWBY rose to ask His Majesty's Government whether they would have a Return laid upon the Table of the House giving the amount of Crown Lands which in the opinion of the Commissioners might be suitable for subdivision into small holdings.

The noble Earl said: My Lords, I think it was Lord Rosebery who, last year, speaking in the south of England, referred to the question of Crown lands, and offered the suggestion that the Government should make experiments on those lands with a view to developing them into small holdings. I was sorry to see that the suggestion was not followed up by discussions in the Press, and in consequence of that I have ventured to put this Question on the Paper. I hope the noble Earl the President of the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries will be able to see his way to grant this Return, because I feel that it would be most interesting and useful to know the total acreage of agricultural land and the locality, and also out of the total acreage what acreage would be suitable for small holdings. I would go further. I have not put it down, but I would make a suggestion that in that Return, if granted, the acreage of the farms should be given, because I eel very strongly that in these days all large farms should be split up. I have been very busy during the last three or four years in doing this, and now in my office I have filed schemes for dealing with every large farm on my estates. It is somewhat difficult to speak on this question of Crown lands because I have no *data* to go upon; but if the suggestion were adopted I feel strongly that it would go a long way to solve the very difficult problem of the migration from country villages to our towns, and, if extended on a large scale, I feel that we might possibly have migration from the towns to the country.

The noble Earl may remember that I gave evidence at some considerable length before the Royal Commission on Small Holdings, and I endeavoured to point out that these small holdings could be created at no loss to the landowner. On my estate, consisting of 13,000 acres, I have to-day no less than 2,000 acres of small holdings, and I would suggest that if this experiment on Crown lands should prove successful it might be extended in two directions. His Majesty's Government might very well approach the large Universities, who, I believe, own a very large number of acres, and I know from personal knowledge that a good many of their farms would lend themselves to being split up into smaller farms and into small holdings. One cannot but remember that the Universities are absentee landowners in the same way as the Crown Lands Commissioners, and it would be no hardship to them, more especially if I am right in saying that they could develop their property at no financial loss to themselves.

Then I would suggest the use of glebe lands. I am negotiating to-day for the purchase of three or four lots of glebe lands to convert into small holdings. There, again, I contend that these lands lend themselves very readily to the creation of small holdings. I would venture, if I might, to congratulate the Government and the noble Earl (Lord Carrington) on having shown such keen interest in this very important question. I myself should like to see all land which is suitable developed in this direction; and I am sure I can say, on behalf of noble Lords sitting on these Benches, that if the Government were to bring in a Bill in this direction, they would have the support of a large number of noble Lords on this side of the House. There are some objections, perhaps, but the objections I have met with are principally want of knowledge on the part of the landowners, and, also, they are frightened at the question of expense. I might perhaps, be allowed to make the suggestion —I do not know whether it is feasible or not — that the Board of Agriculture could very well employ two or three experts whom owners of land could go to and consult, if they were desirous of developing their properties in this direction.

As regards the cost of these small holdings, may I, if I am not trespassing too much on the kindness of the House, give just one case to prove that these holdings can be created at no loss to the owner. I will take the case of thirty acres of grass land. I find, from my own personal experience, that it is possible to get £1 an acre more rent from this grass land than you would get from a large farmer farming perhaps, three or four hundred acres, which gives one a rental profit of £30. Then you would have to pay £500 for a cottage and homestead—£300 for the cottage and £200 for the homestead. That, at 5 per cent., which is the rate the Lands Improvement Company charge for interest and redemption, amounts to £25. If you deduct £25 from the £30 profit, it gives you a net profit rental of £5 a year. This I have done to a very large extent lately, so that I can speak from personal knowledge.

I would like to make one further suggestion. His Majesty's Government have in the past treated Irishmen very liberally. I do think the time has now come when the present Government might do something, not for the landowners, but for English agriculturists in this way. They might, to my mind, advance money at local loan rate of interest, which, with the redemption, would not be 5 per cent., but might be brought down to 4 per cent. That would make the whole difference. It would, I am sure, be an inducement to landowners still further to develop their property in this way. The noble Earl the Chairman of Committees of your Lordships' House is Chairman of a Committee on Small Holdings which is sitting at the present moment, and I hope his Committee will make some definite recommendations which the noble Earl the President of the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries may possibly embody in the Bill which I am told he proposes bringing in next session.

*LORD HYLTON: My Lords, before the noble Earl replies, I should like to ask the noble Lord the First Lord of the Admiralty whether he could see his way to grant a similar Return in regard to the very large landed estates of Greenwich Hospital in the north of England and elsewhere. Perhaps I ought to apologise for not having placed this Question on the Paper, but a Return was presented by the noble Lord with the Navy Estimates the other day on the subject of the landed property and the revenues of Greenwich Hospital. It appeared from that Paper, as many of your Lordships are aware, that Greenwich Hospital is a very large landowner in the north of England. It is not only a very large landowner, but it stands in a position which many other landowners would like to occupy — it is the possessor of very large funds, which it seems to lend in a very judicious way at high rates of interest to public bodies, corporations, and so on. Now, if those funds are derived from the sale of portions of its landed estates, or of its mineral royalties, and so on, I think it might fairly be contended that those funds, instead of being disposed of in the way I have alluded to, should be utilised, as my noble friend has suggested, in making experiments with regard to small holdings.

I think nobody in this House will deny that it is one of the greatest misfortunes to the landed system of this country that so many thousands of acres are held in mortmain. I do not attack the administration of the Commissioners of Woods and Forests, the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, Greenwich Hospital, the Charity Commissioners, the Universities, or other bodies such as I speak of; but it is an undoubted evil for all persons living on their estates and in the neighbourhood that there are these great absentee landlords in perpetuity, who are absolutely unable, despite the best intentions on the part of the administrators, to take any human interest or show any human sympathy in the concerns of the neighbourhood. Hundreds of thousands of pounds are taken out of the districts in which the estates are situated and diverted to other purposes: excellent purposes, no doubt, but they do not in any way tend to solve the great agricultural problem my noble friend has alluded to. The estates of the Duchy of Cornwall and of the Duchy of Lancaster are, I believe, beyond the control of Parliament, but the others to which I have referred will, I hope, come within the ken of the Committee of which the noble Earl at the Table is Chairman, and I trust that something will be done in the direction my noble friend wishes. I hope the First Lord of the Admiralty will be able to grant a Return in regard to the lands under his direction.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Lord TWEEDMOUTH): My Lords, the question that has been raised by the noble Earl is one about which I do not think there can be any difference of opinion in this House, either on private or public grounds. I think I can say, on behalf of all your Lordships, that we should be only too glad to increase the number of small tenants on our holdings; and I am sure we are also agreed that it is greatly to the public interest that that should be done. To-day I am speaking only as the mouthpiece of my noble friend Lord Ripon; but I have put myself in communication with the Commissioners of Wood and Forests, and I think I can correctly state the attitude that they are likely to take in this matter.

I do not need to remind you of the difficulties of breaking up large farms and turning them into small holdings. You must remember that you have certain duties to the tenants of the large farms. You cannot arbitrarily turn a man out of a big farm which he has farmed well, where he has spent his life, and on which he has expended a great deal of capital, simply in order that it may be cut up for the benefit of small holders. You have also to consider the large expenditure that has been made on these large holdings in the way of buildings and so forth, which are quite useless for the small holder when he comes in. It will therefore be seen that it is not altogether a simple problem. I would say, both on behalf of the Commissioners of Woods and Forests and of the authorities at Greenwich hospital, that they do not think in either case it would be possible to give such a Return as is asked for by the noble Earl.

The noble Earl asks His Majesty's Government whether they will have a Return laid on the Table of the House giving the amount of grass land which, in the opinion of the Commissioners, might be suitable for sub-division into small holdings. Doubtless, a great deal of the land is suitable for division into small holdings, but you must consider the circumstances under which that land is held at present before deciding whether it is possible to use it for small holdings. In the view of the Commissioners of Woods and Forests—and I must say I agree with them in that view—it is a local question affecting the particular holding which is at the moment under consideration. I can assure your Lordships, on behalf of the Commissioners of Woods and Forests and the authorities of Greenwich Hospital, that they are only too ready, whenever a holding becomes vacant, to consider the question of breaking it up and making it a subject for the experiment of small holdings. They do feel, however, that they must also pay attention to the existing tenants of the property.

I was for a year and a-half Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, and was brought into contact with the management of lands belonging to the Duchy, and I do not agree with the noble Lord that these proprietors care nothing for their tenants or for the interests of the people on their properties. I think just a word of caveat ought to be put in with regard to that charge. I must also say that, though the Commissioners of Woods and Forests are not able to give the Return in the form in which it is asked for by the noble Earl, they will be very ready to give information showing the exact number of small holdings held under the Crown in their Department. They will also gladly give information with regard to farms which become vacant, and which, therefore, are in a position to be considered as to whether they should be re-let *en bloc* or sub-divided into small holdings. I do not think I need detain your Lordships further. The subject is one which is particularly well understood by my noble friend the President of the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries, and if any further information is desired he will be able to give it.

*THE CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES (The Earl of ONSLOW): My Lords, I quite understand the difficulties which the noble Lord sees in the way of granting the Return asked for by my noble friend. The noble Earl asks for a Return giving the amount of Crown lands which, in the opinion of the Commissioners, might be suitable for sub-division into small holdings. I have the greatest possible respect for the two gentlemen who have so ably, and for so many years, conducted the business of the Office of Woods and Forests, but I venture to think that there is a great deal of difference of opinion amongst those who are qualified to speak on the subject of what land is or is not available for this purpose; and I very much doubt whether, even if the noble Lord were prepared to give this Return, we should be entirely satisfied with the results.

I was glad to hear my noble friend say that His Majesty's Government were prepared to lay before Parliament information with respect to changes in the tenancy of farms which might be suitable for breaking up into small holdings. There was some pressure put on the Department to convert into small holdings a very suitable farm in Lincolnshire, and the opinion of the Department was that it was not expedient to do so. I am not aware for what reason I have the honour, as my noble friend behind me has told you, of being Chairman of the Committee which has been appointed to inquire into this subject. As I never prophecy unless I know, I will not express any opinion as to what may be the Report of that Committee; but this I can say, that the success which may attend small holdings does not arise from any one particular condition, or even from a combination of conditions. You may have very good land and turn it into small holdings, and yet it may be a complete failure if the people are not used to cultivating land in small holdings, and if there is no demand for such holdings: You must have the demand before you can provide the supply.

I would say at once that there are conditions which are certain to make small holdings a failure. If you have stiff land in a cold climate, far from the market, cultivated by men with no other occupation, the experiment is certain to be a failure; but the converse of that does not necessarily make for success. You may have only one antithesis of those conditions, and that one condition may make your small holding a success. I will give an instance. We have heard a great deal on the platform and elsewhere of the small holdings of my noble friend the President of the Board of Agriculture. I rather think the burden of my noble friend's song to his brother landowners has been, "Go thou and do likewise;" but it does not always follow that the conditions of other people's land are precisely identical.

Now what are the conditions of my noble friend's small holdings? We were fortunate on my Committee to have before us the representative of the Co-operative Small Holdings Society, of which my noble friend is, or was until he assumed office at the Board of Agriculture, the President, and we were informed that the farms which have been turned into small holdings were at a considerable distance from the nearest town—that of Spalding. One was three miles away, and the other five miles. You would think that they would be provided with the most modern equipment, yet on one of the farms there were only the old farm buildings divided among three people, and on the other farm, five miles from Spalding, there was a farmhouse, two labourers' cottages, and the shepherd's house. The other people who occupied these holdings had to walk five miles to cultivate them. You will wonder how they could be a success, but they are a success, because they happen to be in a part of the country which for generations has been inhabited by men who thoroughly understand small holdings. As long ago as 1880, 20,000 out of 26,000 of the holdings in that part of the country were small holdings. The soil is so rich that as much as £40 has been obtained off a single acre from potatoes and celery grown upon it. Notwithstanding the distance these small holdings are from the homes of the workers, and notwithstanding the many drawbacks to them, the fact that there is this extraordinarily good quality of soil makes the small holdings a success. There are other reasons which go to make the success of small holdings. There may be excellent markets adjoining; there may be large areas of common land on which the occupier of the small holding may be able to turn out his cattle; and he may have other occupations to fill up his time.

I think it would be impossible for anyone to do what the noble Earl asks the Office of Woods and Forests to do—namely, to say, of any particular area of ground what amount is or is not suitable for small holdings. There is plenty of land available in this country for all the small holdings required. I believe there is not the slightest disinclination on the part of the landowners to turn their land into small holdings if they can do so economically and on sound business conditions; and when you consider that there are already not less than 4,500,000 of acres in England, Ireland and Scotland in small holdings of from five to fifty acres, and that 10 per cent. of those are owned by the occupants, you will admit that there is no indisposition in this country to utilise land in small holdings. All that is necessary is that landowners should be convinced that it is an experiment which is likely to be successful, and that they should be furnished, as my noble friend asks, with the necessary facilities for equipping the land as small holdings. I confess that after what we have heard from noble Lords opposite, and especially from my noble friend the President of the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries, in favour of small holdings, I shall be very much astonished if I do not find a readiness on the part of His Majesty's Government to utilise in this way those estates which they themselves control, and with which they can do as they like, and thereby set an example to the landowners of England.

*LORD BARNARD: My Lords, as a large landowner I should like to express my entire concurrence with the views of His Majesty's Government as expressed by the noble Lord the First Lord of the Admiralty, and I should like also to endorse very heartily the opinion which has fallen from the Chairman of Committees Lord Onslow. I am convinced that very great caution is necessary in dealing with this question. It would be a very great mistake to lay down as a general proposition that all agricultural land was suited for small holdings. I have a very large number of small holders, though I regret to say their position is at the present time an exceedingly difficult one. In Upper Teesdale, on my estate, there have been for generations a number of holders of from five to fifty acres, and at the present day their position is a very piteous one. In former days, by dint of extreme hard work and great thrift, they managed to eke out a comfortable subsistence, because the bulk of their families were engaged in lead-mining, but the lead-mining industry, unfortunately for myself and for these people, has ceased. The consequence is that it is with difficulty these men can get along at all. In fact, my agent has gone so far as to suggest whether it would not be possible, instead of dividing the land, to let some of the holdings together, to enable some of these people to earn a decent living. I may say that the holdings are a good distance from the railway. It may be asked, Why not start motors? The answer is that the winter in this part is extremely severe, and there are very often two or three feet of snow.

May I refer to another of my estates? In Shropshire I occasionally have opportunities of buying small bits of land, of changing the size of holdings, or of establishing small holdings. Provided you do not attempt to do it on a wholesale scale, it will be of use in such a locality, because not only do these men live in a state of comparative independence and happiness, but they are able to get other employment by supplying labour to the large farmers, and on that account I think it would be useful to encourage small holdings. But I should deplore any attempt to do away with the present race of British farmers by dividing their farms into small holdings. It has been in the past a very great advantage to have a race of farmers farming considerable areas, and I think it would be a national misfortune if the sons of these men, who, judging from my own experience, are only too anxious to obtain farms similar to those occupied by their fathers, were driven out of existence.

*LORD ZOUCHE OF HARYNGWORTH: My Lords, before the noble Earl replies, I should like to say one word in sympathy with the question raised by Lord Harrowby. This is an extremely important subject, and I should like to see facilities given also for small ownerships of land. There have been pointed out in the course of this debate one or two difficulties in the way of carrying out this project with facility, but I do not think the point has been raised as to local authorities dealing with this matter. Some years ago there was, I believe, a scheme for local authorities to rent land and then sub-let it to small tenants. That, I am afraid, has not always been a success.

I happen to know of an instance near where I live in the South of England, where it has not proved successful. It was the case of a small farm belonging to a local charity. The trustees let it in the first instance to the county council, getting, as was natural, as high a rent as possible. The county council then proceeded to divide the holding into three lots, the whole farm being a small one of 20 acres. The consequence was that the rent which the county council charged naturally left a margin over the amount they had to pay to the trustees, so that these holders were saddled, not only with a heavy rent, but with a far higher rent than they would have had to pay had they obtained the land direct from the landlord in the ordinary way. So much so that in this particular instance the rent per acre charged was nearly double that paid for land of the same quality quite near these holdings. That, I think, is a point which should certainly be dealt with in considering this great scheme. It seems to me that the less local authorities have to do with it the better, however well intentioned they may be. Of course, there is a way of getting out of the difficulty. The local authorities might sub-let at a loss, but that, needless to say, would be very hard, if not a fraud, on the ratepayers.

Then there is another great drawback to the creation of small holdings, and it is a difficulty common to almost all sub-division or dealings with land. I refer to the enormous, and often exorbitant, fees charged by lawyers, surveyors, and gentlemen of that description. They always say—and may say truly—that it takes just as much trouble to deal with a small piece of land as with a large piece; but that does not help matters very much, and what I think often stops the creation of small holdings, when both the landowner on the one hand and the small farmer on the other would be ready to embark on such a scheme, are the exorbitant costs of carrying out the transaction in the first instance. It appears to me that His Majesty's Government, who I am glad to hear have considerable sympathy with this question, might come to the rescue in one or two ways. It is surely not beyond the wit of the Government to devise some scheme by which these legal expenses and the expenses of conveyance might be very materially lessened. As I am not a lawyer I cannot presume to offer any strong opinion on that, but I am certain that these expenses have proved, and, unless some amendment is made, will prove, a serious drawback to the creation of small holdings. The Government might help in another way, by making loans both for the benefit of the small holders and the owners on the land on which these small holdings are created. But it is no use making loans if you charge exorbitant terms and hedge the loans round with conditions, and with those difficulties which generally come under the name of red tape. I believe in the truth of the old maxim that where there's a will there's a way; and I think if the Government take this question up in earnest, they may see their way to help on both of these points. In particular, I think it will be satisfactory to your Lordships to learn that the Government are fully alive to the great interest of this question, and to the serious bearing it has on the future of agriculture in this country.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY: My Lords, I hope I may be pardoned for intervening in this debate, but I do so as a landowner who, though having been in absolute possession of my estates for only a few years, had the management of those estates during the lifetime of my late father, who took a great interest, not only in allotments, but also in the system of small holdings. I entirely agree with what has fallen from my noble friend Lord Tweedmouth as to the impossibility of turning out a very good tenant. If the tenant has farmed the land very well he is a pearl of unknown value, and you would naturally be very loth to get rid of him.

But there is one point which has not been mentioned in this debate, and it is that the whole of the land on large farms is not of the same quality. Take a farm of four or five hundred acres. If you cut it into small holdings, what is to become of the bad land incorporated in that farm? The valueless land sinks down and goes out of cultivation, the good land being given to the small holders. Therefore, it is impossible in such a case to expect the land set out in small holdings to be let at the same rate per acre as was the case with the large farm. I know there is land eminently suitable for small holdings. The County Council of Norfolk have purchased a tract of land of this nature in West Norfolk. That land is let, and the occupiers will do extremely well. It is the same with allotments. I let allotments at exactly the same rate per acre as I let the farm to the farmer. In some places they make it answer. I know land not very far from me which is let at twice the price charged to the large farmer, and the holders do well. Why? Simply because they can grow black currants.

LORD SALTOUN: By whom is the land let?

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY: The Norfolk County Council. But out of those allotments the people make a very good thing. The whole point turns on the suitability of the land. There must be very careful investigation, otherwise you will find there will be more land out of cultivation through the creation of small holdings than there is at the present time. If you wish to have small holdings and really believe that they are for the benefit of this country, why not adopt the French system and have division of land at death and at the end of 100 years? The country would then in time be full of small holdings.

LORD ORANMORE AND BROWNE My Lords, coming from a country where the system of small tenants is very extensive, and where it has not been a success, I desire to say a very few words in this debate. It must be remembered, in the first place, that these tenants as a rule have a very small amount of capital, and, therefore, a bad season, sickness, a large family, or want of thrift affects them much more than tenants of large holdings such as one sees in England and Scotland. What has been the result of this system in Ireland? The result has been that exceptional legislation has been necessary there, and I do not think any one of your Lordships would say it has been a success, as it has had to be constantly remedied during the last twenty-five years. Noble Lords in England ought to think very carefully before they encourage in this country anything which might lead to measures being taken similar to those which have been taken in the sister isle.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF AGRICULTURE AND FISHERIES (Earl CARRINGTON): My Lords, I should like first of all to congratulate the noble Earl (Lord Harrowby), though I am afraid we are unable to give him quite the Answer he desires, on having initiated a most interesting debate, in which noble Lords who have had practical experience of the subject have taken part. The noble Earl told us of the practical manner in which he had tackled the subject. He had split up his large farms until he had 2,000 acres under small holdings. That is a very comforting thing to hear, and I hope that notice will be taken of it in the Press, as it shows that the idea is not so chimerical as some people believe. The noble Earl has suggested—and a very good suggestion too!—that University farms, when they come into the market, should, in proper and suitable places, be divided into small holdings. With that suggestion, and also with the suggestion which the noble Earl made as to glebe lands, I think every member of His Majesty's Government would entirely agree.

The noble Earl the Chairman of Committees gave us his experience. He said that before small holdings could be created there must be a demand. Naturally, there must be a demand, or it is no use providing the supply. The noble Earl alluded to my own experience. I do not wish to trouble the House with that, beyond saying that everywhere, as far as I am concerned, the small plots of land that I have let out have been a success. They have been a success in North Lincolnshire, in Mid Lincolnshire, on the clays of North Buckinghamshire, in Aylesbury, and in South Buckinghamshire also, and everywhere the rents have been paid. But, of course, they have been the greatest success in the fine fenlands of Lincolnshire, where, perhaps, they have been the greatest object lesson of all. Then Lord Barnard gave us his experience, which was very satisfactory also, and he mentioned that there were applications on the part of small holders to increase their holdings.

*LORD BARNARD: I am sorry to interrupt the noble Earl, but I wish to explain that I did not say there were applications from the tenants to increase the holdings. I said it was a question whether I should not, as landlord, have to put them together and make large holdings.

EARL CARRINGTON: I beg the noble Lord's pardon; I thought the tenants had applied. The noble Lord also said that it was a thousand pities to do away with the British farmer. I am sure every one will agree with him in that. There is no intention of doing away with any class of agriculturists. I submit that there is room for all. There is room for the thousand-acre farmer, the one hundred acre farmer, the fifty-acre farmer, the ten-acre farmer, and the small allotment holder. Lord Zouche entered into the question of lessening the costs in connection with the sale and transfer of land. That is a very great question, and one which ought to be seriously considered. I would mention that in Australia one estate of 1,250,000 acres changed hands at a cost in transfer expenses of certainly under £5—I believe it was only £2; and I think that shows that something might be done with advantage in the Mother Country in the direction of reducing these high charges.

I now come to the question of Crown Lands. The figures in regard to Crown Lands show that in days gone by the Crown Commissioners have not turned their attention very much to the question of small holdings. I am bound to confess that I do not think the Commissioners of Crown Lands are to blame. I must respectfully point out to noble Lords opposite that for the last twenty years, with the exception of two and a half years, the Party opposite have been in power; and surely something might have been done, and some instructions given to the two distinguished servants who have the duty of looking after these Crown Estates to turn their attention in the direction of small holdings. But, so far as I can understand, during the last twenty years the estates have been managed on very different lines. The custom has been to let the farms to the best tenants possible. That is quite right; but the Commissioners, I believe, with the concurrence and to the entire satisfaction of those who were above them, favoured large farms. They did not initiate small holdings in any way, and, as has been stated, in some instances they refused the applications of syndicates and individuals who approached them with a view of taking Crown property and splitting the land up into small holdings. The syndicate with which I am associated in Lincolnshire applied for a farm for that purpose, but the Crown Commissioners could not see their way to let it to them and it was let to a big farmer. I believe in that instance it was let to a man who had a considerable amount of land in that neighbourhood, and he added field to field and farm to farm. For the last twenty years nothing much has been done in the direction which is now so properly and so urgently desired.

His Majesty's present Government have been in office only about two months. I am glad to be able to assure noble Lords opposite that in that short time something has been done. A fortnight ago a tenant of a farm belonging to the Crown Commissioners died, and the farm, which is in Lincolnshire and consisted of 200 acres, came into the market. It was eminently suitable for the object we have in view. My syndicate and I applied to the Commissioners to have it. We were most courteously received, and, although it has not been absolutely decided, I understand there is no objection to our having it, and I believe it is as good as settled that the Commissioners will let us have the farm to be cut up into small holdings. I have been able to introduce to the Crown Lands Commissioners another syndicate, who are approaching them in respect of 1,000 acres of vacant land. That syndicate is a very solvent one. It is composed of Mr. Rose, the Member for the Newmarket Division of Cambridge, General Booth, and Mr. George Herring, who has given the Salvation Army the magnificent sum of £100,000 to be invested and used for this purpose. I believe the farm is being inspected to-day, and that before very long this money will be invested in Crown property. Cottages will be erected, roads made, fences put up, wells dug, and we shall have on this 1,000 acres of Crown land a very satisfied and flourishing community. I should like to say that this is not in any way a charitable scheme. It is done on a business footing, and we hope that it will be an object lesson to landowners and the public at large, and show that if the system were carried out to a greater extent the exodus from the agricultural districts to the town might be largely stopped.

Once again I thank the noble Earl opposite for having brought the subject forward. I can assure him that the words that were used by the Prime Minister are not empty words. The Government are fully determined to do what they believe they have a mandate to do—namely, to put the people back, as far as possible, and under good conditions, on the land. In conclusion, let me say that, if I can be of the slightest service to noble Lords who take an interest in this matter, I hope they will call upon me, for no trouble will be too great on my part to further the cause they have at heart.

THE EARL OF HALSBURY: My Lords, the only part of the discussion on which I wish to say a few words is that which has reference to the expenses incurred by persons who want to transfer land. The noble Lord who referred to that subject urged that something should be done in that matter. I think something has been done, and if the system had not been obstructed by a class of gentlemen who not unnaturally desire to preserve the monopoly of these things to themselves, a great deal would have been done. It must be remembered that there is now a power, by the application of the Lands Transfer Acts, to make it compulsory if the county councils consent; but, although an effort has been made, to my knowledge more than once in some counties, there is a very active and energetic class of persons who by canvassing county councils have been able to paralyse that attempt.

I did not understand what was said by one noble Lord as to the high costs involved in dividing farms where the owner has himself divided them. I do not know that the assistance of a lawyer is very much required in that matter. I quite agree that, when you have to deal with the transfer of land and the making out of the title, it is one of the most monstrous things in this world that every time the transfer is made the whole cost of inquiring into the title has to be incurred. How we have permitted that system to continue so long is a complete mystery to me, and I am convinced that, when once the thing is understood, the efforts of those who seek still to preserve this system will be in vain, and owners of land will not permit themselves to have, as a continual drag on the transfer of land, the extraordinary and ridiculous expenses incurred in the investigation of the title.

*LORD SALTOUN: I desire to offer a a very few words to your Lordships on this question. Since I have owned my estates I have recognised that smaller holdings were absolutely required. I have been spending very large sums of money every year in converting large holdings into smaller ones, and I would inform noble Lords that great expense is involved thereby. You have to change the whole shift of the field, and also to do away with the large buildings which were of service to one farm, and make two or three additional houses. The great difficulty in altering holdings is the cost of building smaller houses and so forth. The noble Earl opposite referred to land bought by the County Council of Norfolk and let in small holdings. There is no doubt that where the county council steps in the price goes up and the cost is very much greater. The noble Earl the President of the Board of Agriculture referred to the fact that his syndicate had purchased some land. I would like to ask him if it is proposed to erect buildings on that land.

EARL CARRINGTON: I do not think it is necessary to put up buildings. We find that the farm houses can be occupied by two families having about fifty or sixty acres of land apiece. The rest is farmed in small holdings; the people having the big patches do the cultivation for their neighbours and are paid for that. The smaller holders do their own harvesting, but the heavy work—the ploughing, harrowing, etc.—is done by the men who live in the farm house. It is a co-operative system which answers very well. We put no buildings up at all.

*LORD SALTOUN: I understand the noble Earl to say that two tenants and their families are content to live in one farm house, and to cultivate sixty acres of land. I cannot understand that. I am certain that under no condition would a farmer in the north consent to live in such a way. As far as I can gather from the noble Lord, the tenants on the other small holdings have to live anywhere.

EARL CARRINGTON: They live in the village.

*LORD SALTOUN: Then they may have miles to travel to till their ground. That surely is not a satisfactory arrangement. Buildings must be erected on the land or the tenants will cry out for them, and they will have to be provided. That is the chief consideration in this matter, and I am glad to have had the opportunity of bringing out that point.

*THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE: My Lords, I think this discussion has been most satisfactory in one respect—namely, in that it has elicited from a number of Members of this House a unanimous expression of opinion in favour of the desirability of extending the system of small holdings so far as this can be done with the prospect of practical success. Nothing could be further from the truth than the idea that difficulties have been created in the way of the establishment of such holdings by the class of landowners to which your Lordships belong.

A useful note of warning has, however, been struck by several noble Lords who have addressed us. This transition, if it is to take place, is not one which can be allowed to take place abruptly or precipitately. My noble friend at the Table was quite correct when he dwelt upon certain conditions in the absence of some or all of which experiments of this kind are predestined to failure. You must have suitable soil, you must have abundance of roads, you must have easy access to markets, and, last of all, you must have cultivators who are in themselves and in virtue of their experience and knowledge suited to undertake successfully the cultivation of a small piece of land. The idea of transplanting wholesale a number of people from our towns—people who have been employed in urban occupations, as workmen or owners of small shops—and dumping them down upon unoccupied stiff land in different parts of the country, and expecting that they will succeed as small farmers, is a pure and simple chimera.

It is true that the legal expenses of converting a large farm into small ones, so long as you are not transferring the land, but merely letting to tenants, is not a formidable obstacle; but there are other obstacles which are formidable. If you have to cut up one very large farm into a number of small ones you have to adapt the old premises, such as they are, for use by two or three smaller occupiers, and you have to erect new buildings and farmsteads for the remainder of the land that has to be dealt with. That is a very formidable item of expenditure. I am afraid I could point to one case in my own knowledge where an experiment of this kind was tried under the most favourable conditions and with the assistance of the Small Holdings Association which was so generously promoted by the late Lord Wantage, but where it met with very disappointing results. I expect the noble Earl the President of the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries has heard of the case to which I refer.

What is always liable to happen in an ordinary case of this kind where the experiment is not conducted, as it was in this case, by an Association, but by the landowner himself, is this—the owner is liable to have his land handed back to him with a number of wholly inappropriate and useless buildings upon it, and very likely in an extremely foul and neglected condition. All these are considerations which cannot be wholly neglected.

One word with regard to what has been said as to the manner in which the Commissioners of Woods and Forests have dealt with this subject. I suspect that the Commissioners have been instructed to administer the Crown estates upon the most economical principles, and in such a manner as to produce the largest revenue that could be obtained from them; and I doubt very much if they would be very grateful were they told that it was expected they should be the first to make upon the Crown states that *experimentum in corpore*—I will not say *vili*—which has been suggested by some of your Lordships. I would go further and say that not only the Commissioners of Woods and Forests, but all those public bodies who have to administer land, not for themselves, but in the interests of different sections of the community, should look very carefully ahead before they commit themselves to indiscriminate experiments of this kind. Where the experiment can be tried carefully under conditions likely to produce success, by all means let it be tried; but I think we should put aside as unworthy of encouragement any idea of a wholesale and indiscriminate attempt to introduce these small holdings regardless of the local conditions which may be present in different parts of the country.

BLACK ROD'S AUTHORITY.

The CHAIRMAN of COMMITTEES: My Lords, your Lordships will recollect that last year there was a Report of the House of Lords Offices Committee in which it was recommended to your Lordships, and the recommendation was adopted by the House, that a Select Committee should be appointed to inquire into the power and authority of the Gentleman Usher of the Black Rod. Accordingly I have placed on the Notice Paper for to-night a Motion for a Select Committee, with the names of noble Lords who are willing to serve upon it. I would add that my noble friend Lord Camperdown has taken very great interest in this matter from the commencement, and I shall propose on a future day to add his name to the Committee.

Moved, "That a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into the power and authority which the Gentleman Usher of the Black Rod exercises, and has in past times exercised, with reference to the appointment and control of the door-keepers and messengers of this House, and the origin thereof; and whether it is legally competent for this House to transfer such appointment and control to any other person."—(*The Earl of Onslow.*)

On Question, Motion agreed to.

Moved, That the following Lords be named of the Committee:

L. Chancellor.
D. Norfolk.
E. Liverpool. (*L. Steward.*)
E. Onslow.
E. Cawdor.
E. Halsbury.
V. Knutsford.
L. Robertson.

—(*The Earl of Onslow.*)

On Question, Motion agreed to.

The Committee to appoint their own Chairman.

House adjourned at Six o'clock, till To-morrow, half-past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Thursday, 8th March, 1906.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS (STANDING ORDER 63 COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. Speaker laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, referred on the First Reading thereof, Standing Order No. 63 has been complied with, viz.:—North East Lincolnshire Water Bill.

Ordered, that the Bill be read a second time.

PRIVATE BILLS [LORDS].

Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in respect of the following Bill comprised in the Report laid upon the Table by Mr. Speaker as intended to originate in the House of Lords, they have certified that the Standing Orders have not been complied with, viz. :—West Yorkshire Tramways.

PRIVATE BILL PETITIONS [LORDS] (STANDING ORDERS NOT COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the Petition for the following Bill, originating in the Lords, the Standing Orders have not been complied with, viz. :—West Yorkshire Tramways [Lords].

Ordered, That the Report be referred to the Select Committee on Standing Orders.

Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire Electric Power Bill (by Order). Read a second time, and committed.

London, Brighton, and South Coast Railway Bill (by Order). Second Reading deferred till Thursday next.

South Wales Electrical Power Distribution Company Bill (by Order). Read a second time, and committed.

London United Tramways Bill, "for conferring further powers on the London United Tramways (1901), Limited, for constructing tramways and widening and altering streets and roads, and acquiring lands in the counties of Middlesex and Surrey; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

Romford and District Tramways Bill, "to incorporate the Romford and District Tramways Company; and to transfer to that Company the powers conferred by the Romford and District Tramways Act, 1903; and to confer further powers upon that Company, and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

Heacham Water Bill. "To incorporate the Heacham Water Company, and to enable the company to supply water within the parish of Heacham and certain other parishes in the county of Norfolk," presented, and read the first time; and ordered to be read a second time.

Wigan and Heysham Railway Bill. Order (26th February) that the Wigan and Heysham Railway Bill be committed, read, and discharged. Bill withdrawn. —(*The Deputy Chairman.*)

PETITIONS.

JUVENILE SMOKING BILL.

Petition from Edinburgh, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

PUBLIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS (RELIGIOUS TEACHING).

Petition from Edlington, against alteration of law; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

INCOME TAX (ASSESSMENTS).

Return presented, relative thereto (Part I.) [ordered February 22nd; *Mr. Samuel Evans*]; to lie upon the Table.

SPRING ASSIZES ACT, 1879.

Copies presented, of Two Orders in Council of February 27th, 1906, relating to the ensuing Intermediate Spring Assizes [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).

Copies presented, of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Annual Series, Nos. 3,533 and 3,534 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

PAPER LAID UPON THE TABLE BY THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE.

Irish Land Commission (Account), Copy of Report of the Comptroller and Auditor-General upon the Account of the Irish Land Commission for the year ended March 31st, 1905 [by Act]; to be printed. [No. 82.]

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Cadets College at Osborne—Cost of Training.

MR. BELLAIRS (Lynn Regis): To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty, if he will state what is the total annual cost of a cadet's training at Osborne, to the State and to the parent, inclusive of all outfitters' charges and of proportionate charges for interest on capital cost, depreciation, and staff for all buildings and attached vessels; whether such charges allow for wastage owing to cadets being withdrawn; and whether he will state the number of cadets joining in the first batch, Midsummer 1903, and how many now remain.

(*Answered by Mr. Edmund Robertson.*) The net cost to the State of a cadet's training at Osborne, after all payments by parents or guardians have been deducted, is approximately £98 per annum, inclusive of proportionate charges for interest and repayment of capital outlay, and staff for all buildings and attached vessels and boats, but exclusive of capital expenditure in connection with vessels. This estimate is based on the assumption that the full number of cadets will be borne in the college throughout each term. The fees paid by the parents for the cadet's training are £75 a year, but in the case of a certain number of officers of the Army or Navy in straitened circumstances this charge is reduced to £40 a year. All claims to this reduction are carefully considered in each individval case. In addition to this, the parents are expected to pay the amounts for pocket money, travelling expenses, &c., such as are usual in schools in this country, and to provide their sons with clothing. A total of seventy-five cadets joined the college when it was opened, of which number sixty remain. The wastage in this instance was exceptional.

Accountant General's Department—Admiralty Branch Reorganisation.

Dr. MACNAMARA (Camberwell, N): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether he is aware that, as a result of the reorganisation of the Accountant General's Department of the Admiralty, 138 clerkships, hitherto held by men successful in open competitive examinations, are in future to be filled by men who have passed neither educational nor medical test; and, if so, will he state the circumstances which warrant such a departure from the principle upon which the English Civil Service is founded.

(*Answered by Mr. Edmund Robertson.*) A certain number of second division clerks will, as opportunity offers, be replaced by temporary clerical assistants. As this new class of clerks will not be on the establishment, no medical or educational examination is necessary, only those who prove efficient being retained. This system has been in operation in the Supply Departments of the Admiralty for some years, and no new principle is involved in extending it to the Accountant General's Department. No established clerks will be discharged in consequence of the reorganisation.

Post Office Inquiry.

Mr. GODDARD CLARK (Camberwell, Peckham): To ask the Postmaster-General whether he will, in the inquiry on Postal grievances, deal with the tracers of the Comptroller and Accountant General's Departments, and other small classes, according to the Select Committee's recommendations.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) It will be for the Committee to decide what classes are included in their reference, which specifies principal classes.

County Donegal Telegraphic System.

Mr. HUGH LAW (Donegal, W.): To ask the Postmaster-General why telegrams addressed to Crolly Bridge, Gweedore, county Donegal, have recently been re-addressed to Annagry, though Crolly is within the free delivery radius from Gweedore; and whether, in view of the delay caused by the new practice, he will give instructions that such telegrams shall be delivered as formerly by the Gweedore telegraph office.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) I will have inquiry made and will communicate the result to the hon. Member.

Special Service Seamen and Stokers.

Sir CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean): To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty in reference to the non-continuous service seamen serving a limited period in the Fleet and a longer period in the reserves, what number and what proportion of such men will be thus borne at the end of the financial year in March 1907?

(*Answered by Mr. Edmund Robertson.*) It is estimated that the total number of special service seamen and stokers serving in the Fleet at the end of the financial year 1906–7 will be about 1,400 and 3,500 respectively. The total number of seamen and stokers, including these non-continuous service men provided for in the Estimates for 1906–7, is 44,000 and 29,430.

Sir A. Douglas' Committee on Naval Personnel.

MR. BELLAIRS: To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether he will now reconsider his refusal to lay the Report of Admiral Sir A. Douglas' Committee, dealing with naval personnel, upon the Table.

(*Answered by Mr. Edmund Robertson.*) It has already been decided to present this Report to Parliament.

Licences of Ecclesiastical Commissioners Estates.

MR. HERBERT ROBERTS (Denbighshire, W.): To ask the hon. Member for the Eye Division of Suffolk, as Church Estates Commissioner, what is the number of places upon the estates of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners which have been licensed for the sale of beer, wine or spirits, in or since 1890; and what is the number of places which have ceased to be so licensed during that period.

Church Estates Commission Leases.

MR. HERBERT ROBERTS: To ask the hon. Member for the Eye Division of Suffolk, as Church Estates Commissioner, what is the total number of leases granted by them in or since 1890; how many of these leases have contained a restrictive covenant in respect of the sale of beer, wines, or spirits; and how many have contained a prohibitive covenant in respect of such sale.

MR. HERBERT ROBERTS: To ask the hon. Member for the Eye Division of Suffolk, as Church Estates Commissioner, what was, in 1905, the number of places upon the estates of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners licensed for the sale of beer, wine, or spirits; how many of these places were on estates directly managed by the Commissioners, and how many on land leased from them; and what was the aggregate rent received by the Commissioners in respect of the former.

(*Answered by Mr. Stuart-Wortley.*) I regret that it is not possible to give full replies to these several Questions, as the requisite information could not be obtained without a careful review of all the transactions of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners in relation to their building estates during the last sixteen years. For over twenty years, however, it has been the practice of the Commissioners to insert in new leases granted by them covenants absolutely prohibiting the sale on the demised premises without their licence of beer, wine, or spirits, except in cases of lettings expressly for hotels or licensed houses. In 1905 the leases (not agricultural or mineral) granted by the Commissioners were, renewals included, upwards of 600 in number; at short notice I am unable to say precisely how many have been granted during the whole of the last sixteen years, but the number given for 1905 is probably something like an anuual average. In or since 1890 the number of leases (other than renewals) granted expressly for licensed houses on all parts of the Commissioners' estates throughout England and Wales probably does not exceed eight, and in a few cases lessees of shops have been allowed to apply for licences for the sale of wines, etc., not to be consumed upon the premises. During the same period the Commissioners have suppressed (on the expiration of leases) sixty-two fully-licensed public houses on their estates, and in regard to a number of others, of which leases are at present running, have determined that their use as licensed premises shall cease with the expiration of the leases, and they will accordingly be suppressed voluntarily and without compensation. The Commissioners suppress all beerhouses as leases expire; but no record has been kept of the number so suppressed during the last sixteen years. The number of these must, however, be considerably greater than that of the fully-licensed houses suppressed as above mentioned. From the Commissioners' rental it appears that in 1905 there were on the estates vested in them for the purposes of their common fund or upon special trusts, or managed by their estates committee, 336 public houses, of which twenty-nine were held on yearly or short tenancies, and the remainder for the residues of terms of 999 years and under. (The aggregate rents of house property and ground rents alone received by the Commissioners for the year exceeded £625,000.) The rents of the twenty-nine houses on short tenancies (chiefly village or country inns) amount to about £1,300. I am not able to say that these figures include all the licensed houses on such estates, as a large number of estates at the time of their becoming vested in the Commissioners were subject to leases (still unexpired) granted by the Commissioners' predecessors. In many of these there would probably be no covenant against the sale of wines, beer, and spirits, and consequently lessees may have obtained licences, although the premises were not expressly demised with that intention.

Ecclesiastical Commission Staff.

Mr. HERBERT ROBERTS: To ask the hon. Member for the Eye Division of Suffolk, as Church Estates Commissioner, what is the present staff of the Ecclesiastical Commission; and what where the amounts spent in salaries and pensions respectively during each of the financial years 1890 to 1905, both inclusive.

(*Answered by Mr. Stuart-Wortley.*) The present staff of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners comprises a secretary, five other officers, forty-two clerks (including legal assistants), and eight subordinate officials on the permanent establishment, and thirty-one writers, typists, and others employed in temporary or non-pensionable capacities, in addition to porters, messengers, and domestic servants. The following table gives the amount spent in salaries and pensions respectively, for the years 1890 to 1905, both inclusive.

Year ending.	Amount of salaries and wages.*			Amount of pensions.		
	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
31st October, 1890 - -	23,243	19	3	3,502	17	2
,, 1891 - -	23,634	6	6	3,525	1	8
,, 1892 - -	21,968	1	11	5,563	0	0
,, 1893 - -	21,749	8	10	5,575	18	11
,, 1894 - -	22,075	3	1	5,057	0	7
,, 1895 - -	21,804	7	11	5,500	14	3
,, 1896 - -	21,907	11	4	5,938	9	5
,, 1897 - -	21,382	13	2	6,476	11	1
,, 1898 - -	21,175	2	8	7,058	13	9
,, 1899 - -	21,711	18	7	7,233	13	9
,, 1900 - -	21,722	7	10	7,330	4	11
,, 1901 - -	20,885	7	1	7,482	7	7
,, 1902 - -	21,443	4	1	8,004	10	9
,, 1903 - -	22,192	1	7	7,451	15	7
,, 1904 - -	22,038	8	3	7,654	12	5
,, 1905 - -	21,916	1	11	7,815	8	0

* N.B.—Exclusive of salaries (amounting to £2,700 per annum) of two paid Church Estates Commissioners and the auditor.

During the same period the work of the office has very largely increased in volume.

Fenit Pier, County Kerry.

MR. THOMAS O'DONNELL (Kerry, W.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland what is the amount spent in the building of the Fenit pier, county Kerry; what was the amount of the free grant given from the Exchequer; and what is the rate of interest and sinking fund per annum charged on the loan.

(*Answered by Mr. McKenna.*) A loan of £95,000 was granted in the year 1882 to the Tralee and Fenit Pier and Harbour Commissioners, and, in addition, those Commissioners state that they have spent about £25,000 on capital account out of revenue. No free grant was given. Under the Local Government (Ireland) Act, 1898, a contribution is made from the Local Taxation Account in aid of the cost of the guarantee on the loan. The contribution amounted in 1904-5 to £855 9s. 8d. The rate of interest on the loan is 4 per cent., and the annuity, including interest and sinking fund, is £5 1s. per cent. per annum for forty years.

Irish Training Colleges.

MR. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if his attention has been called to the fact that the Board of National Education of Ireland have strongly urged, in the interests of education, the absolute necessity of maintaining the training colleges in a condition of utmost efficiency, and have unanimously urged upon the Treasury the necessity of making a free home grant for the Belfast, Limerick, and Waterford Training Colleges; and whether, in view of the fact that the settlement arrived at in 1890 has since been set aside by the action of the Government in granting a sum of £50,000 for buildings for the Government College in Marlborough Street, Dublin, he will take steps to secure that the Belfast, Limerick, and Waterford Training Colleges will not continue to receive unfair treatment in this matter.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The Board of National Education have made representations in favour of a free home grant to the Limerick College, but do not apppear to have made any similar representations in respect of the colleges at Belfast and Waterford. These provincial colleges have all been opened since 1890, with the full knowledge on the part of the promoters that a building grant would not be given to them, and I am informed that the Irish Government and the Treasury have consistently refused subsequent applications on behalf of these colleges for a grant to clear off the loans taken up for building purposes. The grant of £50,000 for new buildings, in connection with the Marlborough Street Training College, was made by the late Government two years ago out of the Irish Development Grant. It cannot be admitted that the making of that grant re-opened the settlement arrived at in 1890. The intention of that settlement was then stated to be to place the three denominational training colleges in Dublin on an equality of treatment as to building grants, with that previously accorded to the undenominational training college at Marlborough Street under the control of the Commissioners. The reasons for making the grant in 1904 were fully stated in this House by the right hon. Member for Dover, March 16th, 1904,† and His Majesty's present Government have had nothing whatever to do with that matter. As regards the future, I can at present only say that the whole subject of Irish education seems to me to require much consideration, and no statement regarding it can be made at this moment. I need hardly add that requests for building grants are matters to be dealt with by the Treasury as well as by the Irish Government.

Queen's College Belfast.

MR. JOHN REDMOND: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Government propose to give a further endowment to the Queen's College Belfast; whether the attitude of previous Governments has been that any additional endowments for the Queen's College, Belfast, must be part of a general settlement of the Irish University question; what the reason is for departing from this attitude; and whether, before doing so, there has been any consultation with the representatives of Ireland or with those specially interested in the question of university education in Ireland.

(*Answered by Mr. McKenna*). It is not intended to give a further endowment to

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† See (4) *Debates*, cxxxi., 1305, *et seq.*

Queen's College, Belfast, or to depart from the policy which has been pursued by previous Governments with regard to the Queen's Colleges generally. Expenditure on the buildings of the colleges, whether for maintenance or new works, has always been outside the endowment properly so called, which consists of £7,000 per annum charged on the Consolidated Fund for each college and £1,600 voted annually by Parliament. The grant of £5,400, which has been placed on the Estimates for the ensuing year in aid of the building requirements of the Belfast College is conditional on an equal sum being devoted to the same purpose from contributions raised locally, and does not differ in principle from other grants which have been made in the past for analogous objects.

Labourers' Cottage Schemes in Ireland.

MR. SHEEHAN (Cork County, Mid.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will state the rates of interest at present chargeable under the Treasury Minute for loans granted for the purpose of the erection of labourers' cottages in Ireland, at periods of repayment not exceeding thirty years, forty years, and fifty years respectively.

(*Answered by Mr. McKenna.*) The rates laid down by Treasury Minute are as follows:—For periods of repayment not exceeding thirty years, 3¾ per cent.; not exceeding forty years, 4 per cent.; and not exceeding fifty years, 4¼ per cent.

Fraudulent Army Enlistment—Case of H. Flanagan.

MR. CLAUDE HAY (Shoreditch, Hoxton): To ask the Secretary of State for War if he will state what steps he proposes to take in the case of Gunner H. Flanagan, X Battery, Royal Horse Artillery, who on December 23rd 1905, was warned that he was to be tried by district court martial for fraudulently enlisting in the 6th Dragoon Guards on February 7th, 1902, and who, within two hours of being warned, was brought before the court, and despite the evidence in his favour, was convicted and sentenced to 112 days' imprisonment, and to be discharged with ignominy from His Majesty's service; and whether he will state why, on January 31st, 1906, the finding of the court was quashed and the prisoner released and ordered to rejoin his battery.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) This man was tried for fraudulent enlistment as a deserter from another regiment He denied this, but the court, having satisfied themselves from the evidence before them of the prisoner's indentity with the deserter, convicted him. When in prison he submitted a petition which caused the General Officer Commanding-in-Chief to make further inquiries, which satisfied him that the prisoner was not identical with the deserter. Accordingly, on the advice of the Judge Advocate-General, the conviction was quashed. The prisoner was given twenty-four hours' notice of trial, as required by the Rules of Procedure.

Militia Training.

MR. LANE-FOX (Yorkshire, W.R., Barkston Ash): To ask the Secretary of State for War if he can give the names of the twenty battalions of Militia chosen for winter training this year.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) I am afraid that I cannot give the names of the twenty battalions, as their selection is at present a matter of correspondence with the General Officers Commanding-in-Chief.

Married Soldiers' Accommodation at Chatham.

MR. BENNETT (Oxfordshire, Woodstock): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether, in some cases, the only accommodation provided at Chatham for married soldiers and their families consists of a single room for all purposes and, if so, whether he will take steps to see that this state of things is remedied.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) The question of the accommodation for married soldiers at Chatham has been and is still receiving careful consideration in connection with the more general question of such accommodation at stations at home and abroad.

English Mails for Cyprus.

MR. HENNIKER HEATON (Canterbury): To ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether any arrangements now exist for the conveyance of English mails from Port Said to Cyprus; when did the late mail contract expire; why arrangements were not made by the authorities in Cyprus to provide for a mail service before the late contract expired; and by what means British mails are now sent to Cyprus.

(*Answered by Mr. Churchill.*) No contract steamers at present run between Port Said and Cyprus. The late mail contract with the Bell's Asia Minor Steamship Company expired in December last, and no fresh contract has at present been made, because the Legislative Council is opposed to the continuation of the system whereby a portion of the mail subsidy has in recent years been charged to the Locust Destruction Fund. The matter is engaging the further consideration of the Secretary of State. In the meantime mails to Cyprus continue to be sent to Egypt, from where they are forwarded by one or other of the four lines which regularly trade with Cyprus.

Crown Colony Ordinances.

MR. H. J. WILSON (Yorkshire, W. R., Holmfirth): To ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies if he will lay upon the Table any Ordinances passed in the Straits Settlements, Hong Kong, or other Crown Colonies, and correspondence relating thereto, subsequent to and in continuation of the Return No. 147, of 1894, Contagious Diseases Ordinances, Colonies.

(*Answered by Mr. Churchill.*) I have to refer the hon. Member to Cd. 9523, which was presented to Parliament in 1899 and contained correspondence in continuation of the Return mentioned by him. Ordinances which have come into operation subsequent to the date of the 1899 Blue-book, and correspondence connected therewith, will now be laid before Parliament.

MR. H. J. WILSON: To ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he will lay upon the Table a Report as to the working and results of the Gibraltar Ordinance published in Cd. 618 of 1901, so far as it relates to venereal diseases, and include therein information as to how the chief of police obtains evidence that persons are suffering from such diseases before summoning them to attend at the Colonial Hospital under Section 9; and whether, in practice the Ordinance leads to the periodical, and indirectly compulsory, examination of prostitutes.

(*Answered by Mr. Churchill.*) The Governor of Gibraltar will be asked for information on the points referred to by the hon. Member.

Moyallen (County Down) Letter Deliveries.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.): To ask the Postmaster-General whether, seeing that in the populous district of Moyallen, County Down, there is no second delivery of letters until 7.30 p.m., he can see his way to a mid-day delivery, so that letters received from England may be answered on the same day.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) I am having inquiry made on this subject, and I will communicate with the hon. Member as soon as the report is received.

Scarva Pillar Box.

MR. LIDDELL (Down, W.): To ask the Postmaster-General whether, in connection with the pillar box erected about two years ago at the cross roads in Lisnabrague, Scarva, County Down, he can arrange to have an evening collection, seeing that at the present time letters posted in this populous district during the day are not collected until the following morning, with the result that such letters do not reach their destination in Ireland until two days after being posted.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) This Question was fully considered a few months ago, when it was found that the cost of the postal service to Lisnabrague was already comparatively high, and that no additional expense was warranted for improvements. A collection is at present made from the letter box in question by the postman when delivering in the morning, and, in response to an application, the residents interested in the matter were told that an evening collection could only be afforded if they were prepared to bear the expense themselves. I regret that I am unable to provide such a collection at the public cost.

Tidebrook Post Office.

MR. COURTHOPE (Sussex, Rye): To ask the Postmaster-General whether his attention has been called to the inconvenience caused by the closing of the Tidebrook post office; and whether he will consider the desirability of re-opening this office.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) The Tidebrook post office was closed because the sub-postmaster resigned, and no one else could be found to take the office. Endeavour is again being made to find a suitable candidate.

Imported Linen and Cotton Goods.

MR. LIDDELL: To ask the President of the Board of Trade if there are any Returns available giving the value of hand-embroidered, hem-stitched, and drawn-thread work on linen and cotton goods imported into the United Kingdom from Germany, France, Teneriffe, Japan, China, and other foreign countries during each of the past five years; and, if so, can he state the figures.

(*Answered by Mr. Lloyd-George.*) The Answer is in the negative.

Salisbury Train Arrangements.

MR. CHARLES SCHWANN (Manchester, N.): To ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he will cause inquiries to be made as to the train arrangements in force at the stations (contiguous to one another) of the Great Western and London and South Western Railway Companies at the city of Salisbury, by which delays are caused to passengers, trains being fixed just to miss one another for obvious reasons.

(*Answered by Mr. Lloyd-George.*) The Board of Trade have communicated with both the Railway Companies concerned, and have received a reply from each of them to the effect that the trains upon their respective lines are arranged to connect at Salisbury so far as circumstances admit, having regard to connections at other important junctions. The Companies add that they have done a great deal with the object of facilitating the interchange of traffic viâ Salisbury, and that there are eight trains running through from one system to the other daily, giving services without the inconvenience of change of carriage or station.

German New General Tariff.

SIR HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central): To ask the President of the Board of Trade in what cases the rates of duty of the new general tariff of Germany have not been modified by conventional arrangements; in what cases the rates of duty of the new conventional tariff are higher or lower than those of the old conventional tariff; and what are the approximate proportions of our exports to Germany in these three classes.

(*Answered by Mr. Lloyd-George.*) The information asked for in the first and second parts of the Question will be found in the Return Cd. 2414, published by the Board of Trade. As regards the last part of the Question, a Return is being prepared, which will, I hope, give the hon. and gallant Member the particulars he desires.

Rosyth Works.

MAJOR ANSTRUTHER-GRAY (St. Andrews Burghs): To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty what sums are to be spent at Rosyth during 1906–7 under the Public Works and Loans Act, and from the votes respectively.

(*Answered by Mr. Lambert.*) The only provision for work at Rosyth under Vote 10, 1906–7, is a sum of £300 for repairs to existing houses on the Admiralty property. There is still an unexpended balance of about £40,000 on the total sum of £200,000 provided in The Naval Works Act, 1905, for preliminary expenses; but it is impossible at present to say how much of this balance will be expended during the coming financial year.

Conscientious Objections to the Education Rate.

MR. G. A. HARDY (Suffolk, Stowmarket): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he is aware that a lady of eighty-three years of age is at present imprisoned for non-payment of education rate, and that she is one of 200 persons who have been imprisoned because of their conscientious objection to pay this rate; and will he consider whether any action can be taken to stay sentences of imprisonment pending the announcement of the Government financial proposals respecting the Education Bill shortly to be introduced.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Gladstone.*) I have not heard of the particular case referred to in the Question, but I may say generally that I have no power to intervene in the proceedings for the enforcement of the payment of rates. The matter is one of legal process, not within the province of the executive Government, and not subject to interference under the prerogative of the Crown. But I cannot help hoping that the sense of grievance may be mitigated or removed by the knowledge that the Government have undertaken to amend the Education Act this session.

Colonial Candidates for the Civil Service.

MR. HAROLD COX (Preston): To ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether appointments in the Home Civil Service and in the Indian Civil Service are open to Colonial candidates; and, if so, whether appointments in the Civil Services of the various self-governing Colonies are reciprocally opened to candidates born in the United Kingdom or in India.

(*Answered by Mr. McKenna.*) Appointments in the Home Civil Service and the Indian Civil Service are open, subject to competition, where open or limited competition is prescribed by the regulations, to all qualified British subjects. I have no information on the point raised in the latter part of the Question.

Examinations for Teachers' Training Colleges.

MR. YOXALL (Nottingham, W.): To ask the Secretary to the Board of Education whether a student who has passed the Oxford or Cambridge local senior examination, and who subsequently desires to enter a training college for teachers, would be required to present himself in Part I. of the Preliminary Certificate Examination, or whether success in the above-named University Examination can be accepted in place of Part I. of the Preliminary Certificate Examination.

(*Answered by Mr. Lough.*) Part I. of the Preliminary Certificate Examination is an integral part of that examination, and is not imposed upon candidates for admission to training colleges who qualify for admission to a training college by passing one of the examinations other than the preliminary certificate examination recognised for that purpose. The Oxford and Cambridge senior locals are so recognised, provided that the candidate satisfies the examiners in certain subjects specified in an Appendix to the Training College Regulations.

Emigration of Poor Law Children to Canada.

MR. LEWIS HASLAM (Monmouth Boroughs): To ask the President of the Local Government Board if he will state the number of poor law children emigrated to Canada during 1905.

(*Answered by Mr. John Burns.*) During the year 1905 the Local Government Board issued orders authorising expenditure by boards of guardians in respect of the emigration to Canada of 491 children.

Adulterated Milk Prosecution at Cardiff.

MR. SILCOCK (Somersetshire, Wells): To ask the hon. Member for South Somerset, as representing the President of the Board of Agriculture, whether his attention has been drawn to a case at the Cardiff City Police Court on Thursday, 4th January last, when J. E. Counsell, of Somersetshire, was summoned for selling milk not of the nature and quality demanded and fined £20 and costs; whether he is aware that evidence was given that the milk arrived at Cardiff at 6.18 p.m. on 21st November and was left exposed on the railway company's premises until the next morning before the inspector took a sample; that the churn had meanwhile been tampered with, and that a gallon of milk had been abstracted; and whether in view of the fact that farmers are held responsible for the quality of milk long after it has passed beyond their control, he will consider whether they will advise local authorities to take railway samples of milk immediately on arrival of the consignment at the station, or deal with the matter in any other way.

(*Answered by Sir Edward Strachey.*) The attention of the President of the Board of Agriculture has been directed to this case, and inquiry is being made respecting it. I will communicate with the hon. Member again so soon as the inquiry is completed.

Falcarragh Petty Sessions.

MR. LAW (Donegal, N.): To ask Mr. Attorney-General for Ireland whether he can say if any representations were received by the resident magistrate before the petty sessions held at Falcarragh on the 6th February last in connection with any of the cases tried on that day; and, if so, what was the nature of these representations, and by whom were they made.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) I am informed by the resident magistrate that he received no representation as to any case or cases to be heard at the petty sessions in question. The only communication he received was the usual notice from the petty sessions clerk setting out a list of the cases to be heard.

Indian Council Drafts.

Mr. KESWICK (Surrey, Epsom): To ask the Secretary of State for India what amount of Council Drafts on the Indian Treasuries, since April, 1905, have been brought to account in excess of 19,250,000 sterling, as entered in the Indian Government's Budget last March; what are the circumstances to which such excess drawings are attributable, and to what purposes have those funds been applied; what are the present amounts of the Indian Government's cash balances in India and at Home; if the latter largely exceed the amounts usual in former years; has due consideration been given to the effects on Indian commerce of such a large withdrawal of funds formerly available in the presidency banks for Indian trade purposes; are the recent accumulations of gold here on Indian account connected with the artificially established rate of exchange arranged for in 1900; what is the amount on balance of enfaced rupee paper sent from or returned to India during the same period.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Morley.*) The information asked for was given on the 1st instant in my reply to a Question put to me by the hon. Member for Hythe.†

Second Term Rents in County Tipperary.

Mr. CONDON (Tipperary, E.) To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the Land Sub-Commission, consisting of Mr. Edge, B.L., and Mr. Hunter Pringle, which recently heard cases in the Cashel rural district, county Tipperary, have given decisions fixing second-term rents which have caused dissatisfaction among the tenants generally; whether he is aware that in the case of Mrs. Anne Lalor, tenant, Commander Kellett, landlord, in reference to two holdings, this Sub-Commission confirmed the first-term rent in one case, and slightly raised it in the other on an alleged increased area, poor law valuation made when prices were far higher being substantially lower than the new rents; whether he is aware that the pink schedule reports in both cases state that the tenant has insufficient working capital, and make that a reason for not reducing the rents; and that the Land Commission schedule of agricultural prices during the past fifteen years shows an all-round reduction in values; whether, with a view to providing a remedy for such fixing of rents by the Irish Land Commission, he will introduce a provision into the next Land Bill that rents shall be varied at least according to the variations of agricultural prices, having regard to the nature of the produce of each holding; and whether in these two cases of Mrs. Lalor the landlord's valuer estimated the fair rents at 13 per cent. under the rents fixed by the Sub-Commission.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The decisions of Sub-Commission Courts are judicial decisions, and if either party to any case is dissatisfied with the decision of the Sub-Commission he possesses a remedy in the right of appeal which is provided by law. I am afraid that I cannot, in reply to a Question, enter into a consideration of the various controverted points which the hon. Member raises.

Drainage of the Lower Bann.

Mr. T. W. RUSSELL: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether Sir A. R. Binnie has yet presented his Report on the engineering works necessary on the Lower Bann to maintain the water of Lough Neagh at summer level and prevent the periodic flooding of the district; and, if so, when it will be printed and circulated.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) Sir Alexander Binnie's Report was laid upon the Table on the 28th ultimo, and I am informed that the Paper will be ready for distribution early next week.

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† See (4) *Debates*, clii, 1296.

Land Purchase—Refusal of Advance.

MR. GINNELL (Westmeath, N.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will state the number of cases in which the Irish Land Commission refused, on account of excessive price, to sanction or to advance money in respect of purchase agreements made between landlords and tenants under the Land Purchase Acts prior to that of 1903, the average number of years' purchase paid for land under those Acts, the number of similar refusals on account of excessive price under the Act of 1903, the average number of years' purchase, including the bonus, paid for land under this Act, any cause for the increase other than the discontinuance of inspection for value and the withdrawal from the Commission of the power of refusal; and whether, in view of this increase, His Majesty's Government intend to revive the practice of inspection and the power of the Commission in all cases of sale to disallow prices in excess of value.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The number of applications to the Land Commission for advances under the earlier Land Purchase Acts, which were refused, dismissed, or withdrawn, owing to defects in title, irregularity, insufficiency of security, and other causes, was 7,838, viz., under the Acts of 1885 and 1888, 3,812; and under the Acts of 1891 and 1896, 4,026. It would be impossible, without an examination into each of these cases, to state the number refused on the ground of insufficiency of security. Probably, however, this was generally the reason for the refusal. The average number of years' purchase in cases in which advances were made under these earlier Acts, will be found at pages 93 and 100 of the Appendix to the Report of the Land Commission for the year ended 31st March, 1905. Particulars are also given, with explanatory notes, in a Return to an Order of this House, Parliamentary Paper, No. 90, of the year 1903. With regard to cases under The Irish Land Act, 1903, the following figures have been compiled:—

Table I.

(1) Number of applications for advances entirely refused by the Estates Commissioners, because the prices agreed upon were not secured - - - - - -	128
(2) Number refused on account of insufficiency of security owing to the character of the holding -	83
(3) Number of applications for advances refused in part because the prices agreed upon were not secured, lesser advances having been sanctioned than were asked for - - - - - - -	482
Total number of cases in which, on account of excessive price or insufficiency of security, the Commissioners refused to make advances, or advanced smaller sums than those applied for -	693

TABLE II.

Return showing the average number of years' purchase paid for Estates purchased during the period from 1st November 1903 to 31st January 1906.

Classification.	Number of year's purchase of rent, excluding bonus.	Estimated number of years' purchase of rent, including bonus, actually paid to 31st January 1906.
Direct sales - - -	22·9	25·0
Section 6 - - - -	22·4	25·1
Section 7 - - - -	20·0	21·4
Total - - - -	22·7	24·9

The figures in the second column represent the number of years' purchase on rent. The bonus, when payable, is calculated on the purchase money of estates, including tenanted and untenanted land. No estimate can be made of the number of years' purchase which the bonus and the price represent on untenanted land. Further, the bonus is not declared to be payable until the purchase money is distributed, and the amount which may be payable has not yet been fully drawn. For these reasons no accurate reply to the Question, as put, can be given as regards the number of years' purchase, including bonus. In reference to that portion of the Question as to the causes of increase in price, it is to be remembered that, under the Act of 1903, the Land Purchase Annuity is 3¼ per cent. as against 4 per cent. under the previous Acts, and the Land Commission consider that to this circumstance the increase of price is to a large extent due. I cannot now make any statement as to the intentions of His Majesty's Government with regard to the suggested alteration of the Land Act of 1903.

Militia Dress Service Cap.

MR. H. BEAUMONT (Sussex, Eastbourne): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether the new dress service cap for the Militia will be issued at once to those battalions which do not possess the present cap and cover.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) Militia battalions not in possession of the present pattern cap and cover will be supplied with the service dress cap during the current season. Battalions in possession of the present cap only will be supplied with covers.

Vagrancy.

MR. PIKE PEASE (Darlington): To ask the First Lord of the Treasury, whether, in view of the Report of the Departmental Committee on Vagrancy, the Government intend to bring in legislation, at an early date, dealing with this subject.

(*Answered by Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman.*) I think the hon. Gentleman is a little precipitate. The Report of the Vagrancy Committee has only just been issued, and until we have had time to consider its recommendations it is impossible to make any statement as to the intentions of the Government.

Government Departments and St. Patrick's Day.

MR. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick): To ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he can arrange that St. Patrick's Day will be recognised, as far as possible, a general holiday in all Government departments, especially in the War Department and in Ireland.

(*Answered by Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman.*) I will make inquiries as to the existing arrangements and consider whether anything can be done to meet the hon. Gentleman's views.

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

Gun Practice in Cawsand Bay.

MR. MALLET (Plymouth): On behalf of the senior Member for Plymouth, I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether he is aware that the lives of the fishermen are endangered by the firing practice from a gunboat at Cawsand; and whether he will consider the advisability of following the plan adopted by the Whitesand Bay batteries of restricting such practice to Saturdays and Mondays.

THE SECRETARY TO THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. EDMUND ROBERTSON, Dundee): No complaint has been received of danger from gunboat practice at Cawsand Bay, and owing to the number of men under instruction, it would be impossible to confine the practice to Saturdays and Mondays. A complaint was received by the Commander-in-Chief, Plymouth, in December last, of firing which took place in Whitesand Bay, and instructions have been given by him to prevent a repetition of any dangerous practice in that locality.

Australian and China Squadrons' Cordite Supply.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether the cordite required by the Australian and China squadrons will be obtained in Australia in the future.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: The circumstances have not changed since this question was considered in 1904, when a decision was reached that the colonial requirements and those of the Navy were not sufficient to justify the expense of establishing a cordite factory in Australia.

Admiralty Clerkships.

Mr. MURPHY (Kerry, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether, as a result of the recent re-organisation of the Accountant General's Department of the Admiralty, 149 clerkships hitherto held by men successful in open competitive examinations, are in future to be filled by men who have passed no educational test whatever, and who are not even required to furnish a medical certificate as to physical fitness; and, if so, whether he will state the circumstances warranting such a departure from the principle of open competition embodied in Clause 2 of the Order in Council of the 4th June, 1870.

Mr. EDMUND ROBERTSON: A certain number of second division clerks will, as opportunity offers, be replaced by temporary clerical assistants. As this new class of clerks will not be on the establishment, no medical or educational examination is necessary, only those who prove efficient being retained. This system has been in operation in the Supply Departments of the Admiralty for some years, and no new principle is involved in extending it to the Accountant General's Department. No established clerks will be discharged in consequence of the re-organisation.

Dockyard Discharges—Rosyth Work.

Mr. BELLAIRS (Lynn Regis): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether, in view of the fact that the Rosyth dockyard project owed its inception to a Departmental Committee presided over by Mr. Pretyman, of which the terms of reference dealt exclusively with the accommodation of the dockyards in 1900 and the prospective demands on them, and that the forecasts of that Committee concerning impending congestion of shipping have been falsified so that there has been a net reduction of 6,776 men in ten months in the existing dockyards, the Admiralty will postpone all action in reference to Rosyth until the financial condition of the country is in a more satisfactory condition.

Mr. EDMUND ROBERTSON: I have nothing to add to the Statement I have already made in the course of the debate on the 1st March.†

Mr. ARTHUR LEE (Hampshire, Fareham): I suppose the right hon. Gentleman is referring to the official Memorandum which he read to the House, in which he said he had no intention of abandoning or departing from the scheme? †

Mr. EDMUND ROBERTSON: Those are the words I used, and I adhere to them.

Admiralty Furniture Contracts.

Mr. O'GRADY (Leeds, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether his attention has been called to cases of contracts for furniture for his Department in which the Fair Wages Clause has been evaded; whether he will see that the clause named will be rigidly enforced in future; and whether he will consider the advisability of publishing the names or title of the contracting firms before the contracts are finally signed.

Mr. EDMUND ROBERTSON: I am informed that no complaints have recently been received as to wages paid under contracts for furniture. All complaints of the evasion of the Fair Wages Clause are at once investigated. It is not considered desirable to publish the names of contracting firms.

Mr. O'GRADY: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that much of the furniture manufactured for his Department is classed as sweated goods?

Mr. EDMUND ROBERTSON: No sir.

Australian Silver Coinage.

Mr. WILLIAM REDMOND: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the coinage of silver will now be allowed in Australia.

*The UNDER-SECRETARY for the COLONIES (Mr. Churchill, Manchester, N. W.): The question of the introduction of a special silver coinage for Australia, which has been under consideration for some time, will be further discussed verbally with Sir John Forrest, the Treasurer of the Commonwealth, who recently arrived in England.

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† See (4) *Debates*, clii., 1326.

Suggested Interchange of British and Colonial Civil Servants.

Mr. WALKER (Leicestershire, Melton): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies what reply has been made to the recent recommendation of the Public Service Board of New South Wales in favour of some interchange of public servants between the civil services of Australia and those of other parts of the British dominions.

*Mr. CHURCHILL: The proposal referred to by the hon. Member has not been submitted to His Majesty's Government by the Government of New South Wales. Should the Colonial Government think fit to make any suggestion on the subject, the matter will receive consideration.

Liverpool Trade in Spirits with Nigeria.

Mr. JAMES O'KELLY (Roscommon, N.): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether his attention is being directed to the havoc worked by the liquor traffic among the natives in Nigeria and in adjoining British territory, where so much of the revenue is derived from alcohol; whether he is aware that shipments of Hamburg spirits are being continually sent out by Liverpool merchants, the cost of which for a case containing twelve bottles, labelled, capsuled, and packed in straw, amounts to only 1s. 4¾d. per case; will he say whether any complaints have been made by native chiefs with reference to the harm done amongst the natives by this spirit; and whether, seeing that a former Governor of Lagos has asserted that there are no other means at the disposal of the Government for carrying on the administration of the country than that derived from the revenue from the liquor traffic, the Secretary of State will consider the absolute prohibition of this traffic in Nigeria, Lagos, and other British territories, as is the case in the adjoining Congo Free State and in other portions of Central Africa.

*Mr. CHURCHILL: I cannot say that evidence reaches the Colonial Office showing that havoc is being worked by the liquor traffic among the natives in the territories referred to. I have not been able to verify the figures given by the hon. Member as to the cost of the spirit employed in the trade; but I am aware that they are shipped at very low rates. No complaints have been received by the Secretary of State, at any rate within a recent period, from native chiefs with regard to these spirits. The liquor traffic in West Africa has always been most carefully watched, and His Majesty's Government is very willing to discourage the consumption of spirits by any practicable means. The importation of trade spirits into Northern Nigeria and the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast is absolutely prohibited. These grave questions will continue to exercise the attention of the Secretary of State.

Mr. CATHCART WASON (Orkney and Shetland): Will the hon. Gentleman consider the advisabity of co-operating with France and Germany in prohibiting the introduction of spirits into this part of Africa?

*Mr. CHURCHILL: Certainly, sir.

Uganda—Mortality from Sleeping Sickness.

Mr. JAMES O'KELLY: I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the population of Uganda has decreased in recent years from some 6,000,000 to about 2,500,000, and to what causes this depopulation is to be attributed.

*Mr. CHURCHILL: There are no statistics at the disposal of His Majesty's Government to prove to what extent the native population of Uganda has increased or decreased in recent years, but it is known that the sleeping sickness epidemic has been the cause of a very heavy mortality in certain districts.

The Gold Coast—Cape Coast Castle Franchise.

Mr. NOLAN (Louth, S.): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he is aware that Ordinance 17 of 1894 was put in force in the town of Cape Coast Castle, Gold Coast Colony, on February 14th, 1906, and that, under the Ordinance the bulk of the ratepaying population is denied effective representation upon the town council; and whether, in view of the dissatisfaction amongst the people affected, and of the fact that a deputation is now on the way to London to submit the views of the Omanhim chiefs and people to the

Colonial Office, he will, under the circumstances, instruct the Governor to suspend the Ordinance pending the arrival of the deputation and a full inquiry into the facts to be submitted by them.

*MR. CHURCHILL: The Ordinance providing for the establishment of town councils to which the hon. Member refers, was extended to Cape Coast on July 1st, 1905. Under the Ordinance half the members of the council may be elected by the ratepayers. The objections which have been raised to the establishment of a town council under the Ordinance have been very fully represented to the Secretary of State, and most carefully considered; and, under the circumstances, the Secretary of State sees no sufficient reason to take the course suggested by the hon. Member.

Indian Army Reorganisation.

SIR EDWARD CLARKE (City of London): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether his attention has been called to Section 3 of The Indian Councils Act, 1861, which provides that if any person appointed an honorary member of the Governor General's Council shall be in the military service of the Crown, he shall not, during his continuance in office as such member, hold any military command or be employed in any military duties; whether, in view of the fact that under the scheme of military administration about to be introduced, the officer holding the highest military command in India is to be the head of the new Army Department, and to become for all general purposes an ordinary member of Council, instead of, as at present, an extraordinary member, appointed only at the discretion of the Secretary of State, he has taken advice as to the legality of the constitution thus proposed; and, if so, whether he will inform the House what legal authorities have been consulted, and whether his action has been in complete accord with their opinions.

I beg also to ask the Secretary of State for India whether his attention has been called to Section 2 of The Indian Civil Service Act, 1861, which provides that the Secretary, Junior Secretary, and Assistant Secretary to the Government of India shall be reserved for members of the Indian Civil Service, with certain exceptions, namely the Military, Marine, and Public Works; whether he has been advised that the appointment of military officers to the secretarial offices of the two new Departments in India, namely, the Army Department and the Military Supply Department, can legally be made under this section; if so, whether he will inform the House what legal authorities have been consulted; whether, in the event of the appointment of military officers to the above post not being permissible under Section 2 of The Indian Civil Service Act, 1861, it is proposed that the appointment of such officers should be made under Sections 3 and 4 of the same Act, which provides for the provisional appointment of persons qualified under the Act, subject to the approval within twelve months of the Secretary of State in Council; whether, in that case, it is proposed permanently to fill these posts by a series of provisional appointments; and whether he has been advised that such procedure will be in accordance with the Statute.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Mr. JOHN MORLEY, Montrose Burghs): Perhaps I may be allowed to answer both the Questions together, by stating that I consulted not only the legal authorities at the India Office, but also the Lord Chancellor, as to the arrangements recently made in connection with the new Army Department, and they were clear and unanimous in advising that there can be no doubt as to those arrangements being in complete accordance with the law.

Imperial Customs Service for India.

MR. SCHWANN (Manchester, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether the organisation of the new Department, described as an Imperial Customs Service for India, has been adopted and finally sanctioned by the higher authorities in England, and do the proposals specifically exclude His Majesty's Indian subjects, also members of the Covenanted Civil Services, from the senior positions in India, and confine the Department to Europeans recruited in this country; and, if so, whether, in view of Clause 87 of the Act of William IV., 1833, and the Royal Proclamation of 1858, he proposes to take any action in the matter.

MR. JOHN MORLEY: My predecessor sanctioned the formation of an Indian Customs Service, to be officered partly by members of the Indian Civil Service, and partly by persons appointed direct by the Secretary of State, and to take the place of existing Customs Services in the several provinces. Three of the five collectorships and three assistant-collectorships are reserved for the Indian Civil Service. For the rest the Secretary of State selects and appoints probationers as vacancies occur. There is nothing in the regulations which specifically excludes the appointment of natives of India who are British subjects.

Labour Limitations in the South African Colonies.

*MR. ASHLEY: I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies if he will lay upon the Table a copy of the limitations proposed in the Transvaal and Orange River Colony in respect of the control of those Colonies over the conditions of native labour.

*MR. CHURCHILL: I would remind the hon. Member that the Governor will be required in the future, as now, by his instructions to reserve any bill subjecting non-Europeans to any disability to which persons of European birth are not subjected.

*MR. ASHLEY: Will a copy be laid on the Table, or is it reserved to the Government to deal with these limitations?

*MR. CHURCHILL: If the hon. Member will read my Answer he will see that the question will be reserved for the consideration of the Crown, and consequently it will come under the purview of the Secretary of State, and, through him, to the House of Commons.

British Trade with South Eastern Persia.

MR. T. HART-DAVIES (Hackney, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs if his attention has been called to the report of the Newcomen Mission to South Eastern Persia; whether he will take into consideration the advisability of obtaining a concession for a road from Bunder Abbas to Kerman, and of appointing a Consul-General at Kerman of a rank equal to that of the Resident at Bushire, and of placing Vice-Consuls at Yezd and Bam; and whether he will consider the desirability of pressing on the Persian Government such reforms as will tend to facilitate trade between India and South-Eastern Persia.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir EDWARD GREY, Northumberland, Berwick): The Report in question has been received and is under consideration. The question of improving communications in South Persia has been carefully considered by His Majesty's Government; they are prepared to give a full measure of diplomatic support to private enterprise, but they would not feel justified in incurring expenditure from public funds on undertakings of the nature indicated. His Majesty's Government see no necessity for giving an increase of rank to His Majesty's Consul at Kerman; there are already a British Vice-Consul at Yezd and an acting British Vice-Consul at Bam. His Majesty's Government have pressed and will continue to press upon the Persian Government the desirability of adopting every measure to facilitate the trade in question.

Macedonian Financial Commission.

MR. GOOCH (Bath): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether the financial control of the Powers over Macedonia is intended to end in two years time; and, if so, whether he will take steps in the meanwhile to provide for its continuance.

SIR EDWARD GREY: The mandate of the International Financial Commission has been, in the first instance, limited to two years. How this came to be done will be fully explained in the Papers which will be laid soon. If it is desirable to renew this term, His Majesty's Government will support that, as they have supported other reforms necessary to improve the condition of affairs in Macedonia.

Algeciras Conference.

MR. BOWLES (Lambeth, Norwood): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether His Majesty's Government are now in a position to make any statement with reference to the progress of the Conference at Algeciras.

SIR EDWARD GREY: I do not think it would be desirable for me to make any statement while negotiations are still proceeding.

Unrest at Tangier.

*MR. ASHLEY: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs what steps are being taken, pending the result of the Conference at Algeciras, to secure the lives and property of British subjects in Tangier and its neighbourhood.

SIR EDWARD GREY: His Majesty's Government do not consider that the existing conditions at Tangier are such as to call for special and immediate measures for the protection of the lives and property of British subjects there.

*MR. ASHLEY: May I ask whether the right hon. Gentleman has seen the report that tribal fighting is going on close to Tangier, and that Europeans cannot venture outside the town?

SIR EDWARD GREY: There have been reports of that kind, and there has been a state of disturbance existing for some time past. But we have no information to show that there is increased danger, apart from the general disturbance which has existed for some time.

Turkey and the Sinai Peninsula.

*MR. ASHLEY: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether the Turkish troops have been withdrawn from Egyptian territory near the Sinai Peninsula.

SIR EDWARD GREY: Turkish troops are still in occupation of certain posts in Sinai Peninsula. The matter is now under discussion between His Majesty's Government and the Sublime Porte.

Maintenance of Main Roads.

*MR. ASHLEY: I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether the Government contemplate taking any steps to throw the whole or any part of the upkeep of main roads on the Imperial Exchequer instead of as at present on the rates, in view of the increase in the heavy and light motor traffic.

*THE CHANCELLOR OF THF EXCHEQUER (Mr. ASQUITH, Fifeshire, E.): I have already promised that this shall be considered when the general question of local taxation comes to be dealt with. I am not prepared to say more at this stage.

*MR. ASHLEY: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that this is a very pressing question in the country just now?

*MR. ASQUITH: All questions connected with local taxation are very pressing.

Payment of Members.

MR. NORMAN (Wolverhampton, S.): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will consider the desirability of making provision in the Budget for an allowance in aid toward the necessary expenses to which Members are put in the discharge of their Parliamentary duties.

*MR. ASQUITH: I am not in a position to make any statement as to the provisions of the Budget. The hon. Member may draw his own inferences from what the Prime Minister said last night.

Galway Harbour Board.

MR. CHARLES DEVLIN (Galway): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether he is aware that the Galway Harbour Board are making arrangements with Messrs. Hutchison with the object of discharging a debt; and whether, in view of the interest of the Board of Works in this matter, he will instruct such Board to facilitate the negotiations now pending between the Galway Harbour Commissioners and Messrs. Hutchison.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. MCKENNA, Monmouthshire, N.): I am aware that negotiations are proceeding between the Galway Harbour Board and Messrs. Hutchison. I understand the facilitation of the negotiations referred to by the hon. Member to consist in a proposal that the Board of Works should advance a loan to the Harbour Commissioners to enable them to discharge their debt to Messrs. Hutchison. The negotiations have, however, not reached a stage which will permit of my giving a definite reply to the latter part of the Question.

Shop Assistants and Living-in—Protection from Fire.

Mr. SEDDON (Lancashire, Newton): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he will state the number of persons engaged in the distribution trade, under the living-in system, who have lost their lives through fire; and, seeing that two young persons lost their lives upon premises provided by their employer, on March 3rd, 1906, at Camborne, Cornwall, whether he will inquire what number of assistants were sleeping on the premises, what was the sleeping accommodation provided, and what were the means provided for escape in case of fire.

The SECRETARY of STATE for the HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. Gladstone, Leeds, W.): There are no statistics available on this point, so far as the Department is aware. The London County Council would perhaps be able to produce a return so far as London is concerned, by examining their records, but it is doubtful whether other local authorities could in all cases give the information for their areas, and the work of collecting the returns would be great. There is no question as to the serious danger of fire in many classes of shops. Evidence was given on the subject, especially in regard to projecting shops, before the Committee on the London Building Bill of last session. The whole of the evidence on this Bill is being summarised, at the request of the Select Committee appointed last session to inquire into means of escape from fire in large buildings. I have, however, no power to take any action in the matter. With regard to the second part of the hon. Member's Question I will, if he so desires, ask the local police to obtain for him such information as they can.

Mr. SEDDON: Will the right hon. Gentleman take steps to get a Return on this very important question?

Mr. GLADSTONE: If the hon. Member will speak to me privately and say what he desires, I will consider it.

Harringay Vaccination Prosecution.

*Mr. T. F. RICHARDS (Wolverhampton, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been called to the case of Mr. Joseph Slack, of Harringay, who was summoned before the Highgate bench of magistrates on three separate occasions for refusing to have his child vaccinated, he declaring on each occasion that he held conscientious objections to vaccination; and whether he will take action to compel the authorities to give that relief to conscientious objectors which the Act contemplates, and put a stop to repeated prosecutions.

*Mr. GLADSTONE: My attention has not been called to the case mentioned by the hon. Member. In 1904 a circular was sent to magistrates drawing attention to remarks made by the Lord Chief Justice on the proper interpretation of the section, but as the law stands I have no power to interfere with the discretion given to the justices in the matter of certificates of conscientious objection nor with repeated prosecutions.

Sweating in the East End of London.

Sir W. EVANS GORDON: I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he is aware of the practice among a certain class of employers in the East End of London, under which hands are made to sign indentures to work for a certain period without payment, on the pretence of their being taught a trade; whether he will consider the advisability of collecting a list of firms who treat their employees in this way, and of arranging that tenders from such firms should be refused by Government Departments and local authorities; and whether he has in contemplation any steps for the discouragement of home work and sub-contracting.

*Mr. GLADSTONE: My right hon. friend has asked me to Answer this Question. I have no official information as to the existence of the practice alleged. The question whether any action should be taken to prevent the practice in the case of firms receiving Government contracts is a matter for the particular Departments concerned to consider, and I would suggest that the hon. Member should bring any information which he has in his possession before those Departments. As regards the last part of the Question I am not able to make any statement, but I may point out that certain powers of supervision and control in regard to homework are given to the local authorities by the Factory Act, 1901, Section 107–10. Information as to the exercise of these powers has been obtained by the Home Office from the local authorities and is now being tabulated.

Free Postage for Members.

MR. KEIR HARDIE (Merthyr Tydvil): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether he can state, approximately, the cost which would be entailed upon the Treasury were Members allowed to frank letters posted within the precincts of the House.

THE POSTMASTER-GENERAL (Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON, Tower Hamlets, Poplar): There is no material on which I can base any reliable estimate of the cost which would be entailed on the Treasury were Members allowed to frank letters posted within the precincts of the House. But I have had a Return taken of the letters posted from the two Houses of Parliament on the last three days of its sittings—Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday last. The total number of letters posted was 8,352, and the total postage was £31 18s. 4d., or an average of 2,784 of letters and £10 12s. 9d. of postage a day. It is estimated that 90 per cent. of this correspondence is posted by Members of both Houses. This would give an average of 2,500 letters a day, at a cost of £9 11s. 6d. of postage. How far these figures would be increased if franking were permitted, it is impossible to say.

MR. KEIR HARDIE: Can the right hon. Gentleman say what number of these letters were official documents sent out by the Vote Office ?

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: I understand that the Return given to me refers only to letters bearing stamps.

MR. STANLEY WILSON (Yorkshire, E.R., Holderness) asked whether, as Members were to receive on some future occasion their salaries, the Government would now consider whether they could not give them everything free, particularly free food.

*MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN (Kilkenny): Can the right hon. Gentleman say how many of the 8,352 letters were posted by Members of the House of Commons and how many by the Lords ?

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: I cannot say.

The Post Office and the National Telephone Company's Employees.

MR. KEIR HARDIE: I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether he accepts the findings of the Telephone Transfer Committee of last year relative to the position of the employees of the National Telephone Company; and whether he intends to embody these in a Bill this session.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: I propose to accept the arrangements described in a Memorandum read by my predecessor in this House on the 9th August last† for giving effect generally to the recommendations of the Select Committee of last session with regard to the staff of the National Telephone Company. For reasons stated in Answer to a Question in this House on the 26th February ††, I do not propose to introduce a Bill dealing with the subject during the present session. The transfer will not take place until 1911.

Trade Unions and Employment Returns.

MR. FELL (Great Yarmouth): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether the 271 trade unions, with a total membership of 581,121, which made returns of employment for January last, represent the whole or the bulk of the trade unions; or, if not, what proportion they bear to the total number of trade unions.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. LLOYD GEORGE, Carnarvon Boroughs): The total membership of the trade unions making returns of employment for January last was about 650,000, of whom a certain number were superannuated, not entitled to benefit abroad, on strike, &c., leaving a net membership of 581,121 on which the percentage of unemployed was calculated. The number represented in the Returns is over three-quarters of the membership of all trade unions which give unemployed benefit, which are the only trade unions invited to make these monthly Returns. The total membership of all trade unions is over 1,800,000. Valuable Returns of a non-statistical kind relating to employment are received monthly from a number of other unions. These are utilised in the article on employment, but do not enter into the total on which the percentage of unemployed is based.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cli., 829–30.

†† See (4) *Debates*, clii, 786–7.

MR. FELL: Would it not be possible to make these Returns more complete? They are really of small value in the present form.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: It is the most complete Return made by any country and far more reliable than any other, but if the hon. Gentleman can suggest any improvement I will consider it.

SIR HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central): Do I understand that only one-third of the trade unions make a report?

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: On the contary, I said that all trade unions make some Return, but the Returns which are utilised are those of the unions which give an unemployed benefit, which involves a very severe test of unemployment. The other Returns are published by the Board of Trade.

SIR HOWARD VINCENT: Where?

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: In the *Labour Gazette.*

MR. R. DUNCAN (Lanarkshire, Govan): And the membership represented is three-quarters of the total.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: Over three-quarters.

MR. CHIOZZA MONEY (Paddington, N.): Will the right hon. Gentleman consider the advisability of urging upon the census authorities the provision of a column on the census paper, which would enable workmen to make some statement as to unemployment?

Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE: The next census will be five years hence, and I hope that before then we shall be having much better Returns.

The Wreck of the "Dinnington."

*MR. CATHCART WASON: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade if his attention has been directed to the wreck of the steamship "Dinnington" on the island of Suitha, Orkney, and the rescue of the shipwrecked nine men by William Taylor and crew, and if some public recognition will be made of the services of the rescuers; and also whether the Board of Trade will consider the erection of some shelter that might be used by stranded sailors and fishermen, and if they would recommend the erection of a minor light to prevent such accidents in the future.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: Yes, Sir. My attention has been called to the circumstances attending the wreck of the steamship "Dinnington," and the rescue of some of her crew. An official inquiry has been ordered, and in connection with it, careful consideration will be given to the services of the rescuers. I am informed by the Commissioners of Northern Lighthouses that they have had under consideration the question of lighting not Suitha, but the beacon on the extremity of Ruff Reef, which extends off Cantick Head, and is about half a mile distant from Suitha Island. This proposal has been held over till more pressing claims have been dealt with, but the loss of the "Dinnington" will no doubt be an added argument in its favour. The question of erecting a shelter is not one for the Board of Trade.

Hours of Duty of Railway Servants.

MR. BELL (Derby): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade if he can state the total number of cases of engine-drivers, firemen, guards, and signalmen employed on the British railways who had been on duty for thirteen, fourteen, fifteen, sixteen, seventeen and eighteen hours and upwards per day for the month of March, 1905, and the total number employed in those grades; and if he will have the totals inserted in all Returns of such hours in future.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: It would be misleading to give the total number of instances of long hours for the different grades of railway men referred to in the Return issued for March, 1905, unless the total number of days worked was also shown. The Board of Trade have not got the latter information for the month in question, but in obtaining future Returns the information desired by the hon. Member will be furnished.

Liverpool and the Commercial Intelligence Committee.

MR. A. WILLIAMSON (Elgin and Nairn): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether, in view of the importance of the trade of Liverpool and district, competent representation will be given forthwith to Liverpool on the newly organised Commercial Intelligence Committee, in accordance with the memorial which has recently been presented to the President of the Board of Trade by the Incorporated Chamber of Commerce of Liverpool.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: A memorial containing such a request has been received within the last few days, and is under consideration. I fully recognise the desirability of having such an important commercial centre as Liverpool represented, but there are difficulties in the constitution of the Committee. These I am now considering, and I hope to be able to announce the decision of the Board shortly.

Roumanian Tariff.

SIR GILBERT PARKER (Gravesend): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether the rates of duty obtained for the goods mentioned below in the commercial treaty with Roumania are higher or lower than the duties levied on the same goods under the Roumanian tariff which was in force up to the end of February 1906; and, if so, by how much the duties have been increased or diminished, and what are approximately the proportions of our total trade with Roumania affected by such changes of duty; the goods are specified under Nos. 102, 108, 190, 207, 324, 325, 333–340, 350, 358–360, 362–364 368, 369, 371, 381, 443, 579, 590, 591, 622, 786, 788, 845–847 (see Cd. 2828); and whether the reductions of duty of the new general tariff of Roumania secured by the United Kingdom by the treaty with that country are extended to Germany under the most-favoured-nation clause of the treaty between Germany and Roumania.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: The annual value of imports from the United Kingdom into Roumania covered by the Schedule attached to the Anglo-Roumanian Commercial Treaty and the supplementary agreement of February last, amounts to about £1,120,000, *i.e.*, £617,000 on which the duties of the new Roumanian Tariff have been reduced, and £503,000 on which they have been conventionalised. Compared with the old Roumanian tariff the new conventional rates on these articles are reduced on imports to the value of £245,000; remain unchanged on imports to the value of £8,000,000; and are increased on imports to the value of £867,000. I shall be happy to give the hon. Member a list of the new and old duties showing the amount of the reductions and increases in each case. All the tariff reductions provided for in the Anglo-Roumanian treaty are extended to Germany under the treaty between Germany and Roumania. The German imports benefiting by these reductions amount to about £150,000 or rather less than a quarter of the corresponding imports from the United Kingdom.

Unemployment Returns.

MR. L. HASLAM (Monmouth Boroughs): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade what was the percentage of unemployed in December, 1904, and in December, 1905, respectively, as given in the Board of Trade *Labour Gazette;* are these Returns furnished by employers and their associations, trade unions, local correspondents, and other sources; if so, what class of workpeople are included in the Returns; do the Returns include the unemployed absent from work through sickness or accident; and, if so, what percentages were unemployed from each of these causes.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: The percentage of members of trade unions returned as unemployed at the end of December, 1904, was 7·6, and at the end of December, 1905, 4·9. These percentages are based on Returns from trade unions giving unemployed benefit. The industries represented in the Returns included building, wood-working, iron and steel, shipbuilding, engineering, metal trades, coal mining, textile, paper, printing, leather, glass, and certain other trades.

The Returns do not include those absent through sickness, accident, holidays, or strikes, or for any other reason than want of employment.

Standardisation and Audit of Municipal Accounts.

SIR W. EVANS-GORDON (Tower Hamlets, Stepney): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he proposes to adopt the recommendations of the Joint Committee on Municipal Trading (1903) in regard to the standardisation of the municipal accounts and their subjection to the examination of independent professional auditors.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. JOHN BURNS, Battersea): As regards the standardisation of the municipal accounts, I have appointed a Departmental Committee to inquire and report as to the system upon which the accounts of the various local authorities in England and Wales should be kept. I am considering the subject of the audit of the municipal accounts, but I could not promise to introduce legislation for the purpose of giving effect to the recommendations of the Joint Committee on Municipal Trading on this matter.

Local Rates and Destitute Soldiers and Sailors.

MR. BENNETT (Oxfordshire, Woodstock): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether any steps can be taken by the Government to prevent paupers, whose destitution is due to injuries received during their service in the Army or Navy, from becoming a burden upon the local ratepayers.

MR. JOHN BURNS: I have received a certain number of resolutions from Boards of Guardians to the effect suggested in the Question, and have communicated their views to the Admiralty and the War Office. I am not able to make any statement as to the feasibility of adopting the suggestion.

*MR. JOYCE (Limerick): Has the right hon. Gentleman's attention been called to the case of an old soldier named Patrick Fogarty, who served through the Crimea and Indian Mutiny, and who has been allowed by a generous British Government to die in an Irish workhouse?

[No Answer was returned.]

Displacement of Dwellings in St. Pancras.

*MR. LEA (St. Pancras, E.): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he is aware that the Midland Railway Company have bought land situated between Euston Road and Phœnix Street, and Ossulston Street and Chalton Street, in East St. Pancras, with a view to the extension of their terminus; whether he is aware that this scheme will affect from 2,000 to 3,000 of the working classes; and, if so, what steps does he propose to take to ensure that the railway company in question shall rehouse these people.

MR. JOHN BURNS: I have made inquiry on the subject and am informed that the company have purchased the freehold interest in the land referred to, but that before they can use it for the purposes of their undertaking they must obtain express Parliamentary authority. I will see that in connection with any Bill having this object the point to which my hon. friend refers is not lost sight of.

Sheep Worrying by Dogs at Worplesdon.

MR. MARNHAM (Surrey, Chertsey): I beg to ask the hon. Member for South Somerset, as representing the President of the Board of Agriculture, whether he has been informed that on the night of 10th February, 1906, a flock of ewes and lambs belonging to Mr. G. Gatley, Bowers Farm, Worplesdon, was attacked by a dog or dogs, upwards of fifty of them being either killed or driven into the River Wey and drowned; and whether he will consider the advisability of introducing a measure whereby farmers and others may be compensated in such cases.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: My hon. friend the Member for South Somerset has asked me to reply to this Question in his absence. He has made inquiries into the case to which my hon. friend refers. The facts are quite correctly stated in his Question. He is sorry to say that similar occurrences are frequently reported to us, and there is no doubt that flockmasters suffer very serious losses from the worrying of their sheep by dogs. He does not think that Parliament could be asked to pay compensation for those losses out of public funds, but he believes that the Bill of which he has given notice will do something to mitigate the evil, and he hopes to proceed with it at an early date.

Grants for Agricultural Education.

*MR. BERTRAM (Hertfordshire, Hitchin): I beg to ask the hon. Member for South Somerset, as representing the Board of Agriculture, whether the sum of money placed at the disposal of the Board for grants-in-aid of Agricultural Education and Research is sufficient for the purpose; and, if not, whether the Board will consider the desirability of co-operating with the Board of Education with a view to utilising the resources of both Boards to the best advantage.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE (for Sir E. STRACHEY): We should be very glad to be entrusted with larger funds for the promotion of Agricultural Education and Research, and I believe that there is room for the profitable development of our work in this direction. The officers of the Board of Agriculture and of the Board of Education are in frequent communication on business connected with Agricultural Education, and my noble friend proposes to confer personally with the President of the Board of Education on the subject at an early date. We quite realise the advantages of co-operation between the two Departments.

Grants to Agricultural Colleges.

*MR. BERTRAM: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education whether the Board can aid agricultural as well as other forms of technological education, and upon what grounds the Board has refused to give grants-in-aid to certain agricultural colleges that have applied for them.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION (Mr. BIRRELL, Bristol, N.): If the hon. Member will supply me privately with the names of the colleges to which he refers I will have the matter investigated, but so far as my information goes the places where grants have been refused are places which had already received grants from the Board of Agriculture in respect of the same work. Agricultural education, as well as other forms of technological education, is aided by grants from the Board who are doing all in their power to assist its development. They are in constant co-operation with the Board of Agriculture for this purpose.

*MR. BERTRAM asked if it was not the fact that the Board of Education and the Board of Agriculture necessarily differ in regard to the purpose for which grants are made, and can only give them for specified purposes?

MR. BIRRELL: I understand there is a little overlapping in this case, and I will look into it.

Education Rates Return.

DR. MACNAMARA (Camberwell, N.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education whether he will grant a Return, showing for each county and county borough in England and Wales the amount raised by rates in each complete year since the appointed day under the Education Acts, 1902 and 1903, and the rate in the £ which that represents, under Part II. and Part III., respectively; showing also the same in respect of each borough and urban district council which is a local education authority for Part III. of the Act in each such area.

MR. BIRRELL: I understand that the Departmental Committee appointed by the late Prime Minister are collecting statistics which will include the information desired by the hon. Member; and further that it is the intention of the Committee to submit Returns received by them for the information of the Government in an interim Report which they hope to present before Easter. There will, therefore, I think, be no reason to move for the Return proposed.

German Children's School Hours.

MR. L. HASLAM: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education what are the hours during which scholars attend elementary schools in Berlin and other parts of Germany; what are the intervals between the school hours for meals and recreation; are meals, if provided at the schools, free of charge or paid for by parents or guardians; if free of charge, are the expenses of the meals defrayed by the municipality or the State.

MR. BIRRELL: In Berlin and other large towns the public elementary schools meet for a morning session of 5 hours, on every week-day, beginning at 8 o'clock in the winter and at 7 o'clock in the summer. In rural districts there is generally a morning session of 4 hours on every week-day and an afternoon session of 2 hours, from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. four days of the week. Lessons usually begin at 8 in the winter and at 7 in the summer. In some parts, however, they begin at 8 all the year round, though occasionally, during the more severe winter months, the school does not open till 8.30. In all cases there is an interval of from fifteen to twenty minutes between the second and third lessons, during which the children have lunch (*zweite Frühstück*) and a break of from five to ten minutes between each lesson. With regard to the provision of meals to children, there is very considerable divergence in local practice. The school buildings are very often used as distributing stations, and the meals are provided free of charge to necessitous children. The municipality frequently contributes to the cost, but in no case is any part of the expense borne by the State or the Empire, nor, as far as I am aware, is any attempt made to recover the cost from the parents.

Regulations for the Training of Scottish Teachers.

MR. SMEATON (Stirlingshire): I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland whether, in view of the disapproval of the recently published Draft Regulations for the preliminary education, training, and certification of teachers for various grades of schools expressed by certain school boards and other public bodies in Scotland, and emphasised at a public meeting in Edinburgh on 19th February last, he will consent to summon a conference, thoroughly representative of Scottish opinion, to consider and advise on the said Draft Regulations.

THE SECRETARY FOR SCOTLAND (Mr. SINCLAIR, Forfarshire): The Regulations have been submitted to and reported on by the Provincial Committees for the Training of Teachers. Any representations made regarding them by school boards or other bodies interested in the subject will be carefully considered, but the hon. Member's proposal is not one which can be adopted.

MR. SMEATON: Will the Minute when drafted be laid on the Table of the House?

MR. SINCLAIR: Yes, Sir.

MR. SMEATON: And will it be open to discussion?

MR. SINCLAIR: That rests with the House itself.

Gartmore School Teacher.

MR. CATHCART WASON: I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland if his attention has been called to the dismissal of the head teacher by the Gartmore School Board; and whether any inquiry into the circumstances is being made by the Education Department or by the Scotch Office.

MR. SINCLAIR: The Department is in communication with the Gartmore School Board in regard to this matter.

Insanitation in the Island of Lewis.

MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland whether he is aware that the local authorities in the Island of Lewis are unable to give effect to the provisions of the Public Health (Scotland) Act, or take such action as may be necessary to remedy the insanitary state of the townships, as disclosed in the Report to the Local Government Board for Scotland on the sanitary condition of the Lews, by the Board's medical inspector, Dr. Dittmar; and will he say whether the Local Government Board for Scotland have yet considered the desirability of taking over the public health administration of the island.

MR. SINCLAIR: I am aware of the facts. No decision has been arrived at; but the matter is under the anxious consideration of the Local Government Board and myself.

Highland Deer Forests.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland if he will introduce legislation requiring the proprietors of deer forests to fence in their forests in such a manner as to prevent deer from ravaging the crops of crofters on the adjoining lands.

Mr. SINCLAIR: I am unable to make any promise now as to such legislation, but the point will be carefully considered.

Mr. WEIR: Will the right hon. Gentleman consider the advisability of issuing a circular to owners of deer forests asking them to adopt this course?

Mr. SINCLAIR: I should like notice of that.

*Mr. MORTON (Sutherland): In the case of deer straying through lack of fencing, are the crofters entitled to shoot them?

*Mr. SPEAKER: Notice must be given of that Question.

Peat Presents for Scottish Schools.

Mr. WEIR: I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland whether he is aware that, although the Scottish Office issued a circular on the 30th January, 1894, relieving children of the burden of carrying peats to school for the purposes of fuel, that circular has recently been overruled by a circular issued by a school board in the island of Lewis, to the effect that if parents do not send peats to school by their children, they will be required to pay for their school books, &c.; and, seeing that the departmental circular of 1894 was issued in the interests of the children and not in the interests of the parents, will he take such action as may be necessary to prevent its provisions being abrogated by the action of the local school boards and managers.

Mr. SINCLAIR: This is a matter for the discretion of the school board. The bringing of peats is a purely voluntary contribution, and the continuance of an old custom in the island with which the Department sees no reason to interfere.

Mr. WEIR: In consequence of this very unsatisfactory reply I shall take the earliest opportunity of calling attention to this matter.

Gartmore School Teacher.

Mr. CATHCART WASON: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury if his attention has been called to the dismissal of the head teacher by the Gartmore school board; and whether, in view of the fact that if inquiry shows the teacher has been unfairly and wrongfully dismissed he has no redress, the Government will introduce an Education Bill for Scotland at an early day and refer it to a Committee of Scottish Members.

The PRIME MINISTER and FIRST LORD of the TREASURY (Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman, Stirling Burghs): The first part of this Question has already been answered by my right hon. friend the Secretary for Scotland, and as he has already stated on two occasions that the Government do not propose to introduce an Education Bill for Scotland this session, I do not see that there is anything for me to reply to.

Irish Assistant Land Commissioners' Qualifications.

Mr. MEEHAN (Queen's County, Leix): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether, on the reappointment of Assistant Land Commissioners, steps will be taken to test the qualifications of the gentlemen who will be appointed; and whether, in view of the fact that appointments heretofore made were drawn entirely from the landlord, land agent, military, and official classes in Ireland, some of whom had not any experience of farming, steps will be taken that qualification and practical experience, not politics or religion, will be the test of fitness in future in order to establish confidence in the tribunal.

The CHIEF SECRETARY for IRELAND (Mr. Bryce, Aberdeen, S.): Upon the re-appointment of Assistant Land Commissioners all possible pains will be taken to secure that the gentlemen to be appointed shall be properly qualified by knowledge and experience. Neither politics nor religion will be suffered to influence the appointments.

Police and Public at Ardrahan.

Mr. DUFFY (Galway, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if his attention has been called to the action of the police in the districts of Ardrahan and Claren Bridge in forcing their way into country houses against the will of the owners;

will he say if they are at liberty to search houses, break boxes and furniture, without a warrant; and will he give instructions to have such action put an end to.

MR. BRYCE: On February 27th the police arrested, upon warrants, three persons who are charged with having fired into a dwelling-house; and I am informed by the inspector.general that, upon making the arrests, the police searched the houses in which the prisoners resided and, in two instances, discovered unlicensed fire-arms. The searches were carried out with the permission of the owners of the houses, who are the fathers of the persons charged. I am informed that boxes were not broken open, and that no furniture was injured.

Irish Cattle Exports.

MR. THOMAS O'DONNELL (Kerry, W.): I beg to ask the hon. Member for South Somerset, as representing the President of the Board of Agriculture, whether he will state the number and approximate value of store cattle exported from Ireland annually into Great Britain; the number and approximate value of stores imported from other countries; whether he is aware that this Irish industry, on the security and protection of which the payment of their annuities by the small peasant proprietors mainly depends, would suffer injury if store cattle from foreign countries, where disease is known to exist and cannot be easily detected, were admitted; whether he is aware that stores have been sold in Ireland during the past year at low prices without any appreciable reduction in the price of the finished article; and whether, before coming to any decision, he will have regard to the feeling shown in Ireland on this question by all classes and sections of the community.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE (for Sir EDWARD STRACHEY): The average number of store cattle exported annually from Ireland to Great Britain during the last five years is 476,000. No official information is available as to their value. No store cattle are imported from other countries. The Government take note of the reasons urged by the hon. Member in support of the maintenance of the existing law as to the importation of store cattle from abroad.

Moville Telegraph Office.

MR. O'DOHERTY (Donegal, N.): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether he is aware that the telegraph office at Moville is closed at eight o'clock in the evening; and whether for the general convenience he will arrange that on those nights when Transatlantic steamers are due the office shall be kept open, so that messages notifying their approach could be received.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: I will make inquiry on the subject and communicate with the hon. Member.

The New Constitutions for South Africa—Committee of Inquiry.

SIR HOWARD VINCENT: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury if, before any decision is arrived at regarding the future administration of the Transvaal and Orange River Colony, he will yield, as suggested, to the wish expressed by the High Commissioner on behalf of all His Majesty's loyal subjects, and appoint an impartial Royal Commission to report on the various important matters connected with the problem, and the future peace and prosperity of the Colonies concerned.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I cannot accept as accurate all the statements implied in this Question, and I do not quite understand what is meant by the future administration of the Transvaal and Orange River Colony, nor do I know who are included in the phrase "all His Majesty's loyal subjects." But, putting these embroideries aside, as a matter of fact it is intended to send out a Committee to report on the actual results likely to be created by various proposals for the basis of a new Constitution, especially as affected by the numbers, distribution, and social condition of the population.

SIR HOWARD VINCENT: Can the right hon. Gentleman give the names of the Committee?

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Not yet.

Metric System.

MR. NORMAN (Wolverhampton, S.): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury if he will afford time this session for the passage of a Bill, which would probably be non-contentious, to carry into effect the second of the three recommendations of the Select Committee of 1895, the first and third having already been carried out, namely, that after a lapse of two years the metric system of weights and measures be rendered compulsory by Act of Parliament.

SIR H. CAMPBELL BANNERMAN: I can make no promise on the subject of such a Bill. It would, on becoming operative, necessarily render the use of all existing weights and measures illegal, and I do not think there is ground for anticipating with my hon. friend that such a measure would be non-contentious.

Sweating in East End Trades.

MR. O'GRADY: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether, in view of the sweating that prevails in the furniture, glass-bevelling, boot and shoe, and clothing trades, particularly in the East End of London, he will consider the advisability of appointing a Royal Commission to inquire into the evils, with a view to legislation for its effective removal.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I am in full sympathy with the hon. Member's object, but I fear that I cannot at this stage form an opinion as to whether an inquiry by a Royal Commission is desirable.

MR. O'GRADY: Has the attention of the right hon. Gentleman been called to the fact that an exhibition is now being held in London of the sweated goods?

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: It has not, Sir.

MR. O'GRADY: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that many of the goods made or Government Departments can be classed as sweated goods?

[No Answer was audible.]

Incidence of the Education Rate Committee.

DR. MACNAMARA: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury when the Inter-Departmental Committee, announced by the late Prime Minister in August last as about to be appointed for the purpose of examining the incidence of the education rate, especially with reference to the heavily-rated necessitous areas, first met; how many meetings it has held; when it last met; when it will meet again; and when its Report may be expected.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The Committee was appointed on the 17th October last and held its first meeting on the 20th of that month. It has not taken any oral evidence, but has called for Returns from the local education authorities, which have, however, not yet been completely furnished. I understand that the Committee propose to submit in the course of the next few weeks an interim Report embodying the information received.

THE ARRANGEMENT OF QUESTIONS.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.) drew attention to the fact that since the beginning of the session, on only two occasions had all the Questions put down for oral answer been asked. To-day the Questions addressed to the Secretary of State for War had not been reached at all, and only two of the Questions addressed to the Secretary for Ireland had been asked. Would it not be more convenient if the Questions, with the exception, perhaps, of those addressed to the Prime Minister, were taken in their natural order, instead of being grouped according to the Ministers to whom they were addressed?

*MR. SPEAKER: My personal opinion is that the grouping of Questions tends rather to economise time. By putting a number of Questions in succession to the same Minister, I think a good deal of time is saved. Whether, however, that is so or not, I venture to suggest that the subject might be one of those to be considered by the Procedure Committee. I would point out that if hon. Members could restrain themselves from asking supplementary Questions, there would be no difficulty in getting through the Questions on the Paper. To-day, in addition to the sixty-one printed Questions asked, twenty-five further Questions have been put. The two figures added together make exactly the total number of Questions on the Paper.

MR. BELL (Derby) asked whether Questions could not be proceeded with in the unoccupied interval which so often occurred after private Bills had been disposed of.

*MR. SPEAKER: Such a change would require an alteration in the Rules of the House.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: Is there any Rule authorising the grouping of Questions?

*MR. SPEAKER: The practice of grouping Questions is not prescribed in any Rule. It was suggested by the late Leader of the House and accepted by the House at that time.

One other Member took and subscribed the Oath.

NEW MEMBER SWORN.

Richard Hazleton, esquire, for the County of Galway (North Galway Division).

SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES).

Sir William Brampton Gurdon reported from the Committee of Selection: That they had nominated the following eleven Members to serve on the Standing Committee on Trade (including Agriculture and Fishing), Shipping, and Manufactures, in respect of the Notice of Accidents Bill:—Mr. Cochrane, Mr. Carlile, Mr. Bell, Mr. Secretary Gladstone, Lord Robert Cecil, Mr. Solicitor-General, Mr. Evans, Mr. Glover, Mr. Myer, Mr. John Ward, and Mr. Havelock Wilson.

Report to lie upon the Table.

SELECTION (PRIVATE LEGISLATION PROCEDURE (SCOTLAND) ACT, 1899) (COMMISSIONERS).

Sir BRAMPTON GURDON reported from the Committee of Selection, That they had discharged Mr. Younger, and had appointed Viscount Dalrymple as a Member of the Parliamentary Panel of Members of this House to serve as a Commissioner.

Report to lie upon the Table.

NEW BILLS.

CHARACTER NOTE BILL.

"To make it compulsory upon employers to supply a Reference Note to a person leaving their employment and desiring one," presented by Mr. Bell; supported by Mr. Seddon and Mr. T. F. Richards; to be read a second time upon Friday March 30th, and to be printed. [Bill 81.]

MALE OFFENDERS (WHIPPING) BILL.

"To restrict the punishment of Whipping to the cases of Male Offenders under the age of sixteen years," presented by Mr. Lloyd Morgan; supported by Mr. Eugene Wason, Mr. Abel Thomas, Mr. Trevelyan, and Mr. G. Hay Morgan; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 82.]

PETTY SESSIONAL DIVISIONS (CLERKS) BILL.

"To prohibit Clerks to Petty Sessional Divisions of Counties from undertaking prosecutions of persons committed for trial by the justices of such Petty Sessional Divisions," presented by Mr. Lloyd Morgan; supported by Sir Joseph Leese, Mr. Abel Thomas, Mr. Brynmor Jones, and Mr. Wallace; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 83.]

LAND VALUATION BILL.

"To provide for the better Valuation of landed property in the United Kingdom," presented by Mr. Dundas White; supported by Mr. Pickersgill, Mr. Sutherland, Mr. Rainy, Mr. Findlay, and Mr. Wedgwood; to be read a second time upon Friday March 23rd, and to be printed. [Bill 84.]

RESIDENT MAGISTRATES (BELFAST) BILL.

"To make provision for the appointment and remuneration of Resident Magistrates in Belfast," presented by Sir Daniel Dixon; supported by Mr. Wolff, Mr. Sloan, Mr. John Gordon, Mr. Charles Craig, Mr. Thomas Corbett, and Viscount Castlereagh; to be read a second time upon Friday March 23rd, and to be printed. [Bill 85.]

METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCILS ASSOCIATION BILL.

"To remove doubts as to the legality of the payment of certain expenses by Councils of Metropolitan Boroughs," presented by Sir William Bull; supported by Dr. Macnamara, Mr. W. F. D. Smith, Mr. Remnant, Mr. Crooks, and Mr. Nield; to be read a second time upon Friday March 23rd, and to be printed. [Bill 86.]

AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS BILL.

"To promote Agricultural Education and Nature Study in Public Elementary Schools," presented by Mr. Jesse Collings; supported by Sir John Kennaway, Mr. Rothschild, Sir Francis Lowe, and Mr. Hunt; to be read a second time upon Thursday March 29th, and to be printed. [Bill 87.]

PURCHASE OF LAND (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL.

"To provide facilities for the Sale of Land to Occupying Tenants; and to extend the system of Peasant Proprietary in England and Wales," presented by Mr. Jesse Collings; supported by Sir John Kennaway, Mr. Herbert Roberts, Colonel Kenyon-Slaney, Colonel Lockwood, and Sir Frederick Carne Rasch; to be read a second time upon Thursday March 29th, and to be printed. [Bill 88.]

SMALL HOLDINGS (NO. 2) BILL.

"To amend The Small Holdings Act, 1892," presented by Mr. Jesse Collings; supported by Colonel Long, Mr. Hunt, Mr. Bridgeman, and Sir Frederick Carne Rasch; to be read a second time upon Thursday March 29th, and to be printed. [Bill 89.]

SUPPLY (ARMY ESTIMATES).

Order for Committee read.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. HALDANE, Haddington): I rise upon this Motion to make the statement which is customary about the policy of the Army in the ensuing year—the year which lies in front of us, and I address the House with unfeigned diffidence. My predecessors, or many of them, have been people of great military knowledge, or, at any rate, knowledge with regard to military matters. Never did a Minister rise to address this House on subjects connected with his department with less prepossession. Whether that is a merit or not, it has at least enabled me to approach the consideration of the questions which I had to face in the beginning of last December with an open mind.

Since that time I have busied myself, I think I may say unremittingly, in consultation with the best expert opinion I could obtain, in considering the situation. It is not a very easy situation. It is not one in which I feel very happy in laying before the House. The path is spread with difficulties. Nobody realises more than my predecessor in office how difficult the position of a War Minster is in taking up the affairs of the Army at this juncture; but so far as the question of expenditure is concerned, while I cannot comfort the House by saying that the expenditure of this country is otherwise than enormous, it may to some extent assuage our grief to think that we do not stand alone in this situation. German military expenditure has risen in the last eleven years some 25 per cent. and now stands at £31,000,000, as against our £30,000,000. The French military expenditure is some £29,000,000, an increase of 7 per cent. The United States, a very efficient nation, confine themselves to a Regular Army of some 60,000 men; but that Regular Army, I am sorry to say, costs that very efficient people close upon £23,000,000 sterling. In view of the situation, what I have felt to be my duty was this—to face the question as a business man and endeavour to disentangle what the real situation was and to lay it candidly and fully before the House of Commons. Let me say at once—and this is the only personal reference that I have to make—that I have found my task a fascinating one. There is no part of the question connected with the Army which does not possess peculiar interest. To any one coming to it new the great science which has been evolved in the last few years and which has taken the place of the old art of war, the science of military organisation, is in itself a matter of profound interest. The men one comes across, the new school of young officers—entitled to the appellation of men of science just as much as engineers or chemists—were to me a revelation; and the whole question of the organisation of the Army is fraught with an interest which, I think, is not behind that of the study of any other scientific problem. But the matter does not stop there. The Army touches social questions in the closest way. The relations of capital and labour, the whole problem of education, the topic of temperance, the science of medicine, questions relating to the Empire—and I am one of those who are not ashamed to say they take the deepest interest in them—and, last, but not least, the science of economy, these are topics which in themselves are very attractive. I have endeavoured in the three months which have been at my disposal, with the best assistance I could get, to make as complete a survey as I could of the situation, not with the view of putting forward ready-made plans and schemes—nothing has been further from my intention—but with the idea, if it were possible, of putting my finger on the spot which is the source of the great expenditure to which the nation is committed.

Whether I have done that the House will judge after it has heard me; but in the survey I have applied this test and this only. I have rejected—and I should suggest that they ought to be rejected as unnecessary—all the things that do not make for fighting efficiency. Fighting efficiency is the one test to which we should submit propositions which arise at a time when we have none too much money. If we had Army Estimates of £50,000,000 a year to play with I could suggest many things which would be delightful and interesting; but if this Parliament has been returned pledged to anything, it is to cutting down unnecessary expenditure. I have therefore felt it my duty to scan the Estimates and our military policy with a view to seeing how much could be eliminated which did not make for fighting efficiency and fighting efficiency only. When we have to look into our household affairs we find often that we have to put down our carriages and horses and our champagne, and perhaps our cigars; and I am not sure that we are always the worse for the process.

Now, Sir, I shall come at once to what I have to put before the House of Commons, and in coming to it I wish to say this—I approach the problem with a sense of the enormous difficulties which my predecessors had to contend with and I have had to contend with. The work of keeping down the cost of the Army cannot be the work of one Secretary of State or one Party only. It must be a continuous process. If you try to reduce the bulk of a patient by cutting off his leg, you may get down his weight, but you will not do him any good; and if you meddle rashly with the complicated organisation on which our military policy depends, you will find, when your time is over, and when the swing of the pendulum brings in another set of Ministers, perhaps with different ideas, and perhaps under some popular impulse, that you return to the old state of things with a new avalanche of expenditure, and things are worse than they were before. Therefore, it is my desire, as far as I can—though there are points, perhaps on which we differ deeply—to try to keep up the continuity of things as far as the good work of my predecessors in office is concerned, and, on the other hand, to lay a foundation which all may accept.

Now, Sir, I come to the broad, bare facts of the situation. The Army Estimates are only £17,000 less than they were last year; and I can say that it was difficult enough to keep them at the figure at which they stood even in that year. I found myself face to face with what are called automatic increases to a very large and considerable extent. I am not talking of new services which, naturally, soldiers would have liked to carry out. Some of these new services were necessary, and we have effected those which were essential to fighting efficiency out of savings derived from automatic decreases, so that they have added nothing to standing charges. But we found there were automatic increases amounting to nearly £800,000. There is the increased cost of the Army Reserve, and you could no more get rid of that payment than you could get rid of the payment of interest on the debt of Consols. Then there is the increased charge for stores and clothing, due to the approaching exhaustion of surplus stocks from the late war. That amounted to the large sum of £290,000. We have been living upon surpluses. The right hon. Gentleman opposite was able last year to reduce his Estimates by making use of some £500,000 worth of surplus clothing and other things. I, too, have been able to keep down the Estimates by £400,000, because there was a surplus available. Next year there will not be such a surplus; the surplus which arose from the war will be exhausted; yet the soldier has to be clothed. He must have his boots and shoes, and medicine and blankets; and the result will be that in that and items of the kind there will be an increase of no less than £500,000, which will have to be met somehow by further economies. We have been living far too much on borrowed money in the Army, and the difficulty of getting it down is a very formidable one for a Minister.

Then there is the increased charge for the service of loans—that is, for the payment by instalments of those sums borrowed under the Military Loans Act by our predecessors, and which we have to pay. Then there is the increased sum for pensions, rather more than half of which is for pensions for the rank and file. These amount in all to £597,000. Moreover, there was a windfall of which the Estimates of last year had the benefit, but from which my Estimates get no benefit. This was certain money which came from India for rifles and small arms ammunition for which we had contracted to pay. That brought the automatic increases over last year's figures to the sum of £780,000. I found myself face to face with that; but I went to the military experts and consulted them, and never had a Minister more reason to be grateful to his distinguished colleagues on the Army Council. They took the matter into their hands and in nine weeks they got rid of that £800,000, and they told me that the Army was as efficient for fighting purposes as it was before. I remember reading in the brilliant book written by my hon. friend the Member for Manchester, the life of his father, how Lord Randolph Churchill found himself face to face with the great difficulty of cutting down the Army and Navy expenditure. He tried to get rid of this or that extravagance, but the result was that every attempt at working out economy without the help of the experts landed him in two items of expenditure against every one of saving. I certainly have found no cause to repent of consulting the experts, nor have I anything else but a feeling of gratitude for the ready way in which they have met our efforts and taken on themselves the business of studying economy in the organisation and administration of the Army.

Mr. Haldane.

I pass now to the situation as it stands. As I have said, I have no cut-and-dried plan. To make plans in haste is to repent of them at leisure, and three months is too short a time for any one to produce a scheme; but I do not think it is too short a time in which to produce some sort of survey of the entire situation; and I think I have got something like a view of the situation which I wish to lay before the House. First of all as regards increase of expenditure. In the year 1896–7 the Army Estimates were £18,156,000. In the present year my Estimates amount to £29,796,000. When you come to the reason for this you will find it partly in the increase in personnel. In 1896–7 the personnel under Vote A was 156,174, while to-day it stands at 204,100. If you pass from personnel to units you find that whereas in 1896–7 there were 142 battalions of the Line, to-day there are 156 battalions, a very substantial increase. And of them only seventy-one are at home against eighty-five abroad. Looking a little more closely into the details of the increase, I find to-day that the Guards have been increased by three battalions and that fourteen battalions of the Line have been added between 1897–8 and the present time, that is to say, we have seventeen more battalions to-day than we had at that time, and the whole increase of fourteen units of the Line has been used for the purposes of arrangements abroad. Two battalions were brought home last year—one from Halifax and the other from Bermuda—and I think the right hon. Gentleman opposite is to be congratulated on having got rid of those places as requiring anything like the defence to which they were thought to be necessarily entitled. The result is that there is a net increase of two battalions at home and twelve battalions abroad, the distribution being eighty-five battalions abroad and seventy-one at home; and if you take them from the point of view of personnel, you will find that to-day there are some 60,994 men of the infantry of the Line at home, and 83,292 abroad. In 1896 we had in South Africa some 6,719 white troops.

At the present day, on the first of this month, we had 20,370. When you consider that no man in South Africa costs much under £150 a year, you will see what an enormously increased charge that is. There are increases of expenditure under other heads, such as for troops maintained abroad. In Egypt we have 4,338 white troops; in Gibraltar, 5,041; and in Malta, 9,152. If the whole institution of the Army is dealt with, you will find that whereas, in the year 1896, there were just under 35,000 white troops in the Colonies—I am not touching India—there are to-day 52,432, an increase of nearly 18,000. That being so one sees very clearly where the sources of the rise of the cost of the Army have originated.

But the case does not stop with the increase in the number of men and of the battalions; the cost of keeping the men has gone up. We have increased the pay of the men. No doubt that is a very good thing to have done, although I am not quite sure that it has had a result upon recruiting such as we might have expected from it. The increase of cost is pretty alarming to those who look at the Estimates with the view of seeing how they can be cut down. Whereas in 1896 the cost of the soldier was £63, this year the annual cost is £81. I am talking now of the regulars. The officer to-day costs £484 as against £450 in 1896–97. That is a moderate increase in view of the increased cost of living. The Army Reserve costs £10 5s. 10d. per man as against £9 2s. in 1896–97. The Militia have gone up enormously. A Militiaman costs to-day £21 19s. 3d. as against £13 19s. in 1896-97. The Yeomanry cost £21 5s. 2d. as against £11 9s., and the Volunteers cost £7 1s. 11d. as against £5 2s. I am not expressing any opinion on these figures. I am only giving the House the facts with regard to them. A brief comparison of the Army Estimates taken as a whole in point of establishment shows that the number of the establishment has increased by 46,000 as compared with 1896–7, and the cost has increased by £5,999,000, that is to say by nearly £6,000,000. Other items have gone up, and if you take the gross total you find we are spending under various heads £11,742,000 more than we did in 1896–7, and the disappointing thing is that the increase is under every head. That is a very difficult state of things to deal with, and one which must give rise to a certain amount of irritation. We must proceed in this matter with the utmost circumspection and care. I do not profess to be able to put before the House any large or far-reaching plans for bringing about a reduction. I shall have some ideas to put before the House, but I draw a distinction between ideas and plans in this matter. I have only had three months to deal with this matter, and it is better to make only a survey now and proceed slowly and cautiously, because I feel that anything I do in a hurry is very likely to turn out wrong.

The first question that is likely to be put by the impatient man in the House and the impatient man in the street will be, "Why not reduce the number of battalions?" "You," they will say, "have had a great increase in the number of battalions of the line, why do you not cut them down and reduce them?" There was a rumour the other day in the papers that I had decided to recommend the abolition of ten home battalions of the line. I tried to describe that rumour correctly as a *nidus equinus*, which is a polite and classic way of calling it a "mare's nest." If I had decided to do anything of that kind it would have been in military eyes tantamount to insanity. For many years past we have been working in this country under what is called the Cardwell system, and the theory of this system is that the best way of training your recruits is to link your battalion at home with the battalion abroad. This means that one half of the regiment is abroad and the other half is practically in a depot where men are trained and passed out to India and the Colonies. India will not take recruits of less than twenty years of age, and it desires to have them sent out trained and finished. The result of our system of training is that our battalions at home in time of peace are nurseries or training schools for supplying troops to India and the Colonies. In time of war it is different. The reserves are called out to fill up the home battalions, and the drafts to India would be stopped, and thus we should have an effective fighting force. We have in this country a short service system which operates at the present time as a much too short service system. We have abolished the three years enlistment, which was one of the greatest mistakes ever made. We are still reaping the whirlwind having sown the wind. At present the drain is enormous, but if you take the other system of nine years with the colours and three with the Reserves, it is obvious that drafts can much more easily be sent out to India, which will not take men at a less age than twenty. In my opinion, we shall, perhaps, come to adopt seven years and five years, but on that point I do not wish to say anything at the present time.

We have got to ensure the drafts for India, and it is India which is the cause of the greatest drain upon our establishment at home, and the direct cause of our necessity to keep up so large an establishment as we do within these islands. The Indian establishment being between 70,000 and 80,000 men and the Colonial establishment being 52,000 odd we have to maintain drafts to fill up the wastages in these battalions in India and the Colonies, which are caused by men passing in to the Reserve as their time goes out, and that drain passes on to the battalions at home. We have got more than enough men if you take into account the Reserves and the Militia to man three Army Corps, but we cannot help ourselves to mobility so long as we keep our Indian and Colonial establishments at their present height. The three years system enormously increased the Reserves, which stand at 100,000, and the next year they will number 122,000. Their pay last year was £845,000. This year it will be considerably over a million, with the result that there has been an increase of £220,000 on this amount.

How are we to deal with this situation? It is formidable alike in regard to cost and numbers of men, numbers which are not controlled by the persons responsible for the moment, but which are a feature of the situation. This is a Parliament which does not wish to destroy the Army recklessly; it wishes to proceed circumspectly; it asks for more efficiency for less money, a natural thing to ask for, but more easy to ask for than to supply; and that is the problem. We feel that we have some sort of mandate to attempt to solve it, so strong is the desire in the country that this efficiency at less cost should be brought about, and this involves the whole question of Army organisation. Difficult as is the problem, it is made less hopeless when you take into account the serious way in which it is being considered by the Army itself. A new school of officers has arisen since the South African war, a thinking school of officers—a thinking school of officers who desire to see the full efficiency which comes from new organisation and no surplus energy running to waste. There are certain undesirable things which I feel certain that with this new spirit in the Army we can get rid of if we only conform to certain conditions.

The first thing we want is absolutely clear thinking about the purposes for which the Army exists and the principles in which it is to be organised. That perhaps seemed a trifling thing to say, but it would seem even more trifling to say that copy book maxims are useful things. Every error multiplies itself into millions. In the Army you are dealing with an enormous body of men under all sorts of complicated conditions, and if you are not perfectly clear what you want to do with these men, and on what principles you desire to fashion their organisation, you may be involved in an amount of expenditure and in a state of confusion you cannot realise beforehand. I come here to say a few things about which I can speak the more freely because the principles are the result of clear thinking, not on my part, but on the part of right hon. Gentlemen opposite. One principle is that of the Blue Water school. We do not take that as an abstract dogma to be applied without regard to circumstances. We do accept it in this sense—that the Navy itself at its present strength is capable of defending these shores from invasion. It was laid down with extreme clearness by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the City of London on May 11th last, in a speech to which we all listened with the deepest interest, because we felt it marked a new stage on the way to efficiency, that on the hypothesis of the worst possible moment of our military position, and on the calculation of Lord Roberts, accepted by other military critics, it would not be possible to attempt an invasion of our island with less than 70,000 men, and no admiral of the British Fleet would undertake such a task. That is the advantage of a strong Navy, and very useful when considering the cutting down of all unnecessary Army expenditure. The right hon. Gentleman the late War Minister was of opinion that no foreign nation would care to land 5,000 or 10,000 men. If they did land 5,000 or 10,000 it would be of no use, because they could not come subsequently and take them away. Such a number of men might cause some annoyance but they would all be cut up, not one of them would get back. I ask what general in Europe would throw away 5,000 or 10,000 men merely to cause us annoyance? They would be promptly cut off on the same principle which prevents the invasion of 70,000, because of the great mobility of the Fleet at the present time. The Fleet to-day is intensely mobile in virtue of the valuable policy of continuity in naval organisation, for the inception of which we are grateful to hon. Members opposite, and which we intend to follow out in its consequences with regard to Army reorganisation.

Let us start then on the assumption that we are in earnest with this principle, and that is now a continuous principle. It is the principle of the late Government; it is the principle of the Defence Committee; it is the principle of the Navy; it is the principle of the War Office, and the Army Council; it is the principle of the present Government just as it was the principle of the late Government. It is an accepted principle, and one on which the rule of clear thinking should apply. We have bed-rock fact here for the organisation of our defence. If we are to attempt to provide against the contingency of that being wrong we shall have to provide against various other contingencies overwhelming in their multiplicity and uncertainty. I came to office in December, and being of a curious and inquiring mind, and having taken a great interest in Blue Water principles, I set to work to see whether, following out the policy of my predecessors, I could not find some things in our Army organisation which were inconsistent with those principles, and which therefore might be gently removed. I found that distinguished soldiers whom I consulted were exactly of the same mind. They said, "Let us think clearly and act strongly." We set to work, and I take the things which engaged our attention one by one.

Any one who knows Surrey, and goes down into the neighbourhood of Dorking, will find there certain curious structures, inherited by my right hon. friend opposite and handed over to me. You will find there large wire fences surrounding seven to nine acres of land, and a large construction that looks more like a water-tank than anything else, containing ammunition of various sorts. I stumbled upon one the other day when taking one of my reflective walks abroad, and going in I found some 3,300 rounds of ammunition, cordite, lyddite, shrapnel, the latest pattern of gloves for people working with intrenching tools, and the latest pattern of the mark 3 axe, which had come down from Woolwich to replace the mark 2 axe. I estimated with an eye not wholly unpractised in these matters that there was no less than £25,000 worth of stores there, and I afterwards ascertained I was very nearly right. I asked one in charge how many men had been there for work, and the answer was, "I never saw a unit in the three years I have been here." I asked when the guns had been last there, and was told they had always been at Woolwich. I asked whether there were any more of those constructions, and was told that from a neighbouring hillock I could see a dozen more with the naked eye. These constructions had a definite origin, in a time when the Navy was not the Navy of to-day, when people had not the confidence in the Navy that they have in it to-day, and above all when the Navy had not that mobility which belongs to our splendidly organised Fleet at the present time, and when it may have been necessary to make other provision for the defence of these shores. What an advantage it is when you can get rid of these things, root and branch, by the aid of the firm principle. Those things were considered carefully and in great detail; and now, with the consent of the Government and of the Defence Committee and as the result of acting on a belief in the principle which we have inherited from our predecessors, they are going to disappear root and branch and as fast as they can be made to disappear.

I come to another case. In those days when we had not got hold of the principle that the Navy was to defend these shores, we carefully defended various points all along our coasts. They are defended to-day with guns for the most part of an antiquated pattern and obsolete, though some are of good and of a modern pattern. But be that as it may, and whatever they are, excepting at certain points where they are required for naval purposes, these guns are absolutely useless where they are. They are going—three hundred of them—as fast as they can be got rid of, again with the full concurrence of the Army Council, the Navy, and the Defence Committee, who have considered these things together and not separately, in virtue of their joint policy. In that way we shall get rid of a very considerable and substantial amount of expenditure. I am not suggesting that the right hon. Gentlemen on the Opposition side are responsible for their being there. They inherited the policy. I only say that I feel myself free to get rid of these things root and branch without feeling there is any controversy about them or that I am breaking continuity of policy.

I come now to another case, where the Navy were the sinners. I found that the Island of St. Helena had a garrison of 100 men, costing between £10,000 and £12,000 a year, who were there to defend some 5,000 tons of coal, and when we came to look into the matter the curious thing was that nobody supposed that they were in a position to defend the coal. They had two obsolete guns which were placed in a position where they had no command of the scene of any attack that was likely to be made, and a foreign force landing on the other side of the island could easily have overcome the garrison and obtained possession of the coal. There was obviously no justification for keeping that up, and it has gone.

Another head is the extension of the principle of Blue Water defence to our colonial garrisons. We have that under consideration just now, and we have decided upon it in principle. These establishments where there are both guns and men for the purposes of naval bases have in many cases become obsolete because of the change of policy in the Admiralty. The Admiralty do not want naval bases in the same way as they did before. Their new strategy, which depends upon mobility, involves certain naval bases which will be well defended. But there are certain of them quite obsolete in the Colonies and various other places. We propose to apply the principle of getting rid of superfluities of guns and men in connection with them.

I found lastly that we still maintain the traditional policy of surveying the interior of these islands and making on a large scale a continuous reconnaissance of positions with a view to defending the country against an invading army. I suppose there are plans for the defence of the City of Birmingham against a German Army. I hope the right hon. Gentleman who sits for West Birmingham will derive much comfort from that fact. These reconnaissances cost a great deal of money each year, and they are to come to an end also.

These are small matters in themselves, but they are matters with which we have had to attend to within a very short time. I think I shall have the approval of the House generally for the principle which I have laid down for dealing with these matters; and I feel a certainty that when my time is over and the other side succeed to the responsibility they will carry out that principle in the same way, with the result that the Army will be organised on one principle. I do wish to say that we have suffered very much from changes in the past. Let we take another and final illustration for the moment. There is a place of which we used to hear a good deal in this House, but of which we hear very little now, called Wei-hai-wei. Wei-hai-wei was originally a naval base; now, I believe, it is a watering-place. Whether or no the Admiralty have deserted it, the Army has not. We are keeping up a native regiment there which we enrolled for the purpose of defending it, and which costs us £20,000 a year. No one wants that regiment, and consequently the Government have decided to disband it at once.

All these amount together to no very enormous sum; but I am certain that a beginning on this principle and the fact that it is accepted by both sides of the House and pushed forward continuously will lead in the end to economies. Ah, Sir, if we had only had a continuous principle for the last thirty years we should have been very comfortably off to-day in Army expenditure compared with what we are. The Navy has got something like a continuous principle. I envied my right hon. friend the Secretary to the Admiralty when he brought in his Budget. He had a simple principle which he had inherited from right hon. Gentlemen opposite and in which they support him warmly, the principle of continuous organisation of the Fleet, and principles of strategy and disposition which have remained constant for at least several years, and which we hope will remain constant for many years more. But in the Army it has never been so. In the last half-century we have had no less than four great Army policies, which have led to the throwing away of a vast deal of money. First there was the policy of Lord Palmerston, which was the outcome of the work of the Committee which insisted upon the fortification of the shores of this country on a scale which I am glad to say we have long since abandoned. That was a very serious enterprise, and it cost some £7,420,000, which might absolutely be at the bottom of the sea, so far as concerns use for any purpose. Then came another policy, the eight army corps scheme of 1875, which fortunately never got beyond paper. But, although it did not get beyond paper, it was nutritious as regards increase of expenditure. It led to new ideas about Imperial defence, and to a large loan raised for that purpose in 1889, out of which came most of the money for those London defences of which I have spoken, and which are now condemned in the light of our better knowledge. It is not too much to say that under that scheme a very considerable sum of money was absolutely wasted, not only on permanent works, but on *personnel* and other services. Finally there was the policy which nearly became very costly, the six army corps scheme in 1901. Perhaps the most lasting and permanent memorial of that policy are the Tidworth barracks on Salisbury Plain. There you see stretched out before your eyes acres of beautiful brick buildings capable of containing, not the forces which are there at the present time, but forces a great deal larger. They are standing empty in large part at the present time, and yet they are built for permanence and with a design which would deserve the highest praise if only anyone to-day was so innocent as to think of pitching down an army corps in the middle of Salisbury Plain. They represent a monument of wasted expenditure. We are using those barracks for the much more modern and useful organisations of troops in existence at the present time, the direct outcome of the work of the Esher Commission; but they owe their origin to a more ambitious notion which was due to that confused thinking against which I have protested. In 1901 we ought to have known something about the Blue Water principle and the power of the Navy to defend our shores. We ought to have separated the notion of a striking force for defending the Empire abroad from the notion of home defence. Yet there was an organised plan which apparently owed its origin to German models and under which Home defence and foreign necessities were mixed up together, with the result that there was one huge Army projected which was to unite in itself the function of a striking force and the functions of that home defence which even at that time were seen to be unnecessary. The result was a scheme which, if carried out, would have brought the Army Estimates up to £40,000,000. But, fortunately in the event, with the aid of the new policy of the right hon. Gentleman opposite and the work of the Esher Commission, all this was cut down, and the worst of it remains in the barracks at Tidworth which represent the outcome of the policy.

These things illustrate the necessity for extraordinary caution in that kind of expenditure. I think it has been very disastrous for us that we have had so much money to spend. Our way of raising money for the Army has been by military loans, and when you raise money by loans it is very easy to spend it. You have not to account for it on the Votes. We have raised upon loans during the last few years very large sums indeed. In the ten years ending 31st March, 1906, we have spent £16,065,000 on loans, and under Vote 10 another £16,145,000, making in all £32,210,000. I have to provide in this year's Estimates for a sum of £1,081,500 for interest on the sinking fund for these loans. My right hon. friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer, with my complete concurrence, decided that a check must be put upon the loan policy. You cannot bring it to a close all at once; but we are going to try to pay our way in these matters, and I am quite certain it will make us look rather more closely to our expenditure. One hon. Member perhaps comes to me and says, "I was promised a barracks for the constituency which I represent, and we have got the money for the site, and we have laid the foundation." I have had to say to more than one hon. Member, "That may be right, but I represent the taxpayer, and I cannot consent to the large expenditure which is involved unless I am satisfied that it is absolutely essential to the fighting efficiency of the Army." How can I be satisfied until I know what policy turns out to be and what the organisation of the Army ought to be? You have been contemplating a heavy expenditure in a permanent form for services which may become altogether useless owing to a change of policy, and until I feel certain what that policy ought to be I propose to look very carefully into all expenditure of this character.

Now, Sir, I pass from that to the larger and more important matters to be considered as regards the future. At present I will add merely that I am trying to ascertain what ought to be the fixed policy as regards barracks, in order that we may keep expenditure on something like a contiuuous footing. Passing from these things, which, after all, are mere matters of detail, we come to a larger matter, namely, the principle of the organisation of the Army itself. The Army ought to be so organised that it can respond to policy. If it is necessary to have a large Army at any time—as it may be necessary, for who can say when we may not be threatened—then we ought to have the easiest possible means of increasing our Army. We ought also to have the means of decreasing the Army and shrinking the organisation without making it less efficient. We have learnt a great deal since the South African War. Whatever else that war accomplished, it has taught the nation to be sober, to be serious, to put aside the spirit of militarism and to reflect upon war as well as other things with a view to better preparations and better organisation. There is a new spirit in our officers. They are men to-day of highly scientific training and reflective minds. The inquiry by the War Stores Commission shows that frightful waste and peculation took place in South Africa. Why did it take place? Why was there that leakage? We know, thanks in a large measure to the Esher Committee and other investigating bodies, why that was. Unlike the other great nations, we had never established any thinking department for the British Army. If there had been such a thinking department, they would have made out plans for the operations in South Africa, with the result that the distinguished generals who went there would have thought out every inch of their progress before they undertook it, instead of having to devise ways and means as they went along. Those who have read the Report of the Esher Committee will know what I mean. Those who have read the account of the Japanese campaign will know the profound advantage of a thinking department embodied in the General Staff. The late Government, however, did a thing for which they deserve the thanks of this nation—they carried out the principles of the Esher Committee, and they have laid the foundation of a General Staff. We have got to work it out; and it will not be my fault if continuity is not observed in that policy, and if we do not give opportunities for dividing executive functions from administrative details If instead of the Commander-in-Chief in South Africa being responsible for the stores and for every detail of administration which he could not look to himself, having regard to his field and other executive duties, he could have known that these administrative matters, so colossal and vast, were in competent hands subject to his control, we should probably have had none of that waste and none of those scandals which have been so unfortunate in their result. If that division of labour had taken place you would have had your plans thought out, and the general would have known exactly what he had to do, instead of having to improvise his plans on arrival in South Africa. But that is all over, and we have learnt a great lesson from it. Even in this short interval much has been done, and the Army was never more efficient than it is at the present time. Our Army is now on a better foundation as regards organisation and a better foundation as regards the knowledge of officers, and I include cavalry and infantry officers just as much as Engineers and Artillery, than it has been at any previous period, and this has resulted because we have learnt the lesson of that war and have tried to carry out these things.

Let us see what results from studying the principles of the lessons learnt in the war. Let us get rid of all these London defences, useless coast guns, and all those sorts of expenditure of which I have spoken, and as to which the present Government have already given the order for them to come to an end, and come to things which must be dealt with. It must be remembered that this country is in quite a different position from that of any foreign nation. If Germany or France go to war they have conscription, and they are in this position—that in time of peace they must keep up a vast military organisation. They have only one war to contemplate on a large scale, and that is with their neighbours across the border. They have to be ready to mobilise and to fight within perhaps ten days from the time of the order being given. Therefore they must be ready. It is absolutely necessary that their reserves should be trained up to the eyes and ready when called upon to take the field at once. But the British Army is not like that. We live on an island, and our coasts are completely defended by the Fleet. Our Army is wanted for purposes abroad and over-seas. It is necessarily a professional Army; we could not get such an Army by conscription. It must be of high quality; but because of the limited nature of its functions—to strike at a distance—it ought to be of strictly limited dimensions. Have we ever thought, scientifically and clearly, what these dimensions ought to be? I do not think so. I know that certain things have been worked out, but I do not think the whole problem has been dealt with in its entirety. Here is an island, the striking force of which does not exist for the defence of these coasts—it does not exist merely for our own insular interests. This island is the centre of an Empire consisting of nearly 12,000,000 square miles and including some 400,000,000 of population, and we have to protect the distant shores of that Empire from the attack of the invader. We want, therefore, an Army which is very mobile and capable of rapid transport. For fighting which has to be at a distance and cannot be against large masses of men it ought to be upon a strictly limited scale, and perfect rather in quality than expanded quantity. There never has been enough careful thinking about this problem. If the Army is not wanted for home defence, then its size is something which is capable of being calculated. The size of the striking force is the principal ingredient in the present cost of the Army.

The probable reduction of Army expenditure, however, does not rest merely with the War Office. I am trying to economise; but, after all, the big items come from policy; and that does not rest with the War Office, which is only an instrument in the hands of the Government of the nation for carrying out policy. The reduction of expenditure rests greatly with the Foreign Secretary, the Secretary for India, and the Secretary for the Colonies, and also the First Lord of the Admiralty, for naval policy does in some degree give rise to military expenditure. It is the business of Parliament to consider these things, and to consider what effect policy has upon military organisation. I wish we were near the time when the nations would consider together the reduction of armaments, when they would reflect that it is policy that leads to these things, and would realise that only by united action can we get rid of the burden which is pressing so heavily on all civilised nations. I have said before that it is not possible for me to make reductions in regard to battalions, or individuals at home on any very great scale while the establishments in India and the Colonies remain as at present.

I promised at the beginning of this speech to try to put my finger on the point which has led to the great increase in the cost of the Army. The Indian establishment has remained at the same figure for many years past. But a great increase has taken place in our colonial establishment—the number is 54,000 men—between 1896–97 and the present time. There lies the key to the rise in expenditure from £18,000,000 to nearly £30,000,000. How are we to determine the size of the striking force? That must be done on strictly scientific principles having regard to consideration of policy. I think you can determine even now to a large extent what it ought to be. I do not think you can exclude from the consideration of the question any matters which have a bearing on the problem you have to solve. A short time ago we were menaced on the North-West frontier of India by Russia. Are we menaced by Russia to-day? [Cries of "No."] Have circumstances changed or have they not? Are they not different from what they were? If circumstances have changed, is it necessary to maintain that vast establishment in India, which causes us at home inevitably to incur a large expenditure in keeping up the materials from which to supply drafts for the Indian Army? The same is true of your policy in the Colonies.

There is still something else that must be taken into consideration. I am putting forward no plans, and cannot put forward any until I have had a long time for consideration. But there are certain conditions of the problem which are not very difficult to define. I do not think you will ever satisfactorily reduce your striking force, even if you have solved the scientific problem how much you require for action abroad, unless you provide some power of expansion behind it in this country. That is the effect of the Report of the Norfolk and Elgin Commissions. We spend a vast deal on the Army and we want to spend less. The question is how we are to succeed. If you have a reduced striking force, how can you most cheaply provide for the support and expansion which should be behind it and on which you may rely in great national emergencies? There is one striking difference, which I think has never received sufficient attention, between this country and Continental countries. In Germany from the moment the order to mobilise is pronounced until the time the troops actually come into contact with those of other nations the interval may be very short—a few days only. That involves the necessity that the expansive power of the German Army should consist of men highly trained and ready to take the field at once. The men must have gone through a full course of military training. But that is not so with ourselves. We are on an island, and our striking force is for use abroad and our power of expansion is a power of expansion the exercise of which may be called for, but which gives us always a considerable interval. If we had to fight a great war on the plains of India or in defence of its frontiers it is not likely that such a contingency would come about without a considerable time elapsing. We know that a long time must elapse, and in that period there is the possibility of training men and getting them ready. That seems to point to this, that we differ *in toto* from the Continent in the fact that for the forces on which we have to depend to come to our aid and to expand our regular Army we should have a long time for preparation.

If that is so, surely it is within the limits of possibility to devise a system—I am not professing to devise it now—under which the period of training may be divided into two parts—one to be very elementary, very elastic, very easy for everybody according to his circumstances, and the other to be reserved for the period after hostilities have broken out. The second, of course, will of necessity be expensive. We all know, even those most attached to the Volunteer Forces, that it would be hard upon them at the present moment to set them against seasoned troops. But the Volunteers would be admirable troops after a certain amount of training and after serving with fighting men in the field. That was proved in the South African War. In order to train a very large number of men in a thorough fashion you require the influence of some great national impulse. Such an impulse would come if hostilities had broken out and this country was in real jeopardy. Then I believe you would find men flocking to be trained. But in time of peace is it necessary to go as far as we do even with our Volunteers. ? I should like to see far more men voluntarily taking it upon themselves to acquire the elements of military training in time of peace. I do not see why people should not use the rifle as well as play football; why they should not go to a rifle club instead of going to races. These things might be done voluntarily. What I wish to say is let them do these things for themselves. I am perfectly certain that anything like compulsion or conscription will defeat its own purposes. If you are to get people to give their services you must assign to them definite functions—a definite service which they can render to the country. For that purpose you have to map out an organisation. I do not see why the rifle club, cadet corps, the Volunteers, all the different forms of military organisations which we have at present should not be encouraged, so that the people should be able to organise themselves, so that you should have your citizens possessing the elements of that knowledge which would be requisite for them if they were called upon not only to defend their hearths and homes —because I think considering the strength of our Navy they are not likely to be called upon to do that—but to come to the assistance of the Regular Army in other ways. It that were so, then, obviously, the only economical way of dealing with the matter would be to divide the period of training into two parts—the one elementary and elastic, the other intended to put the Volunteer on the footing of the Regular soldier. I have gone into this question with military authorities very closely. They are at one in thinking such an organisation would be possible, if worked out not merely at headquarters, but if the organisation were designed in such a fashion that all these things should exist in skeleton, as it were, in time of peace. You might, perhaps, thus form in time of peace a reservoir into which would flow the various streams of people from every class who take an interest in rifle-shooting and in drill; people who had the taste might be encouraged to form themselves in a definite fashion into the units of this skeleton organisation; and you might prepare the machinery by which, on the outbreak of hostilities, you could turn the streams which had flowed into this reservoir, some of them perhaps rather muddy, into pure streams which would give support to the Regular Army.

These are skeleton ideas, just as they are ideas of a skeleton organisation. I cannot say whether they can be worked out or not. You will, I think, have to resort to something of the kind if you are to have behind your striking force the certainty of a power of expansion, the necessity of which has, I feel, taken hold of the minds of a great many of the people of this country. Such an organisation as I am speaking of could not be effectively worked through the War Office alone. It must be decentralised; it must be worked by military local government; and by that I mean local government by the people themselves, not by those who would impose on them from without military duties which they might not be disposed to undertake. This must be the work of a citizen army. In the Franco-German war, after the defeat of the main part of the regular army of France, Gambetta, a civilian, made a people's army, which, in conjunction with the army of the Loire, gave infinitely more trouble to the German strategists than the regular army had given. I read the other day something written by Prince Frederick Charles of Prussia, who took a distinguished part in that war. He said—

> "There is for a leader nothing more oppressive than a situation that is not clear, nothing more trying than bands of armed irregular troops, aided by the population and the nature of the country, and relying for support on a strong army in the neighbourhood."

Mr. Pitt, speaking in this House in the time of the troubles with Napoleon—on February 29th, 1804—said that the great mass of our population might be made fit to serve many useful purposes in the hour of danger, and that he would be glad if measures calculated to call into action with effect were concerted and carried into execution. These measures, he said, should be arranged beforehand, leaders appointed, companies formed, and no man should be allowed to run about in confusion calling, "Oh! that I could be in any way useful to my country." I think we can dismiss from our minds all notion of organising ourselves voluntarily up to the war standard in time of peace, all notion of playing at being real soldiers, which we shall never be, and spend the little money that will be necessary, and which will take the place of more costly things we have now, in organising ourselves in skeleton as a nation purely voluntarily and according to the mind of the individual locality, on some such lines as I have indicated. I believe that if that were done, if you had military local government under the control of the people themselves, you would have solved more problems than one. No Ministry would go to war unless it had the people at its back. I have often heard the question asked whether treaties should not be submitted to the people before they are made? Perhaps we shall never get to that stage; but I do think that in this fashion you might get control on the part of the people over the military organisation, which would be the best guarantee that no war would be entered upon without the full consent of the people. A nation under arms in that fashion would be a nation under arms for the sake of peace and not for the sake of war.

I have sketched ideas which cannot be worked out by any one Government. They must take a long time; but that distinction between peace and war training, which seems the peculiarity, and the happy peculiarity, of our islands, does seem to me something worth considering, and whether, in connection with that, the real way to obtain it is not by way of devolution of military administration to local government units.

If that were done there would remain the question which gave the right hon. Gentleman opposite so much trouble—I mean the Militia. I agree it is not to-day in a satisfactory condition; and I think the origin of the want of satisfaction with their position is, as in the case of the Volunteers, that there is no definite function assigned to them. The Militia are the children of the soil called into being theoretically by our Constitution through the Lords-Lieutenant and Deputy-Lieutenants who represent the Crown. I am afraid that the functions of the Lords-Lieutenant and Deputy-Lieutenants are rather nominal than real, and I do not see why we should not make it a condition of the appointment of Lords-Lieutenant and Deputy-Lieutenants that they should be persons who take some interest in Militia organisation. I do not see why we should not regard the Militia as a force which is much more akin to the Regulars than to the Volunteers. I should like to see the Militiaman's functions a little more closely defined. After all, he is a Regular, who for nine-tenths of the year is engaged in civilian duties. Or, if you like, he is a civilian who for one-tenth of the year is engaged in militiary duties. He is not compelled to go abroad, but he always has done so willingly in support of the National Army in times of emergency, and I hope he will always do so in the future; but I should like to see him used, not in the disastrous way he was used only a very short time ago. He was an institution very valuable for military purposes, almost a pure regular reservist. That was a system under which the Militia was first bled white for the Regular Army, and then asked to go out in their depleted battalions to fight. It was fatal to the Militia, and it never recovered. By all means let the Militia be the support of the Regular Army, but let them train in their own units and under their own officers and keep up their distinctive functions, if you are to have any recognition from them and the public of the part they have played in the past and the possible part they may play in the future as something cheaper than the Regular soldier, the man who gives part of his time and who does not put the State to the expense of paying for the whole of his time. I think the Militia principle of using the civilian might be extended to a great many other parts of the Army, like the Army Service Corps; for a good deal of the work done by Regular soldiers is of a civilian character. But that is a topic in which I do not desire to enter at the present moment.

These are ideas which might lead to economy in administration. We have an object lesson in the army of

Switzerland, which numbers 500,000 men and costs £1,200,000. Switzerland is a very small country and the army has to be raised by conscription, and from the reports furnished to me the men of that army are as good as you could wish to see—good even from the point of view of branches like the artillery. I have taken hold of an idea which I may not be able to work out, but which I am ambitious enough to think might be carried out by my successors, of not going on the costly system of paying for all your men as if you had to pay for all their time, but of looking to your Militia and then looking to the Volunteers whom you do not pay at all for the services they render. It seems to me that if you do that you have the foundation of a system by which you may succeed in reducing the size of your striking force to an extent which you could not do without the support I have described, and which would enable you to make economies on a large scale. What is vital is the courage necessary to drive such a conception through. I believe the want of economy arises from the want of exactness of conception. One of the great merits of Mr. Gladstone's famous Administration of 1868, which got rid of so much waste, was that he insisted on clearness of conception of what the State was to do and to be asked to pay. He ruthlessly drove on to economy, scrutinizing small items just as closely as the large ones. We have got to do that in every department of the life of the Army. I hope I have been able to throw out some ideas. If I may have the support of the House in carrying them out during my tenure of office, I shall feel encouraged to believe that at least we may produce a line of action which, if taken up and followed continuously, will in the end lead to that reduction in Army expenditure which we all so much hope for.

But I must touch on one or two other points. One of them is the great group of social questions. You cannot organise such a thing as a British Army without coming very closely into contact with the relations between capital and labour and the great questions that arise in connection with contracts and the organisation of labour. We are trying to deal with these questions in a fashion as free from red tape as possible. There are old traditions under which people refused to see the representatives of trade unions merely because they were the representatives of trade unions and not the employes of the State. But we are in a somewhat different position now. After all, the Army is a nationalised industry; and the Minister who occupies my position has to be extremely careful in dealing with labour—he would like to be generous, but as he takes every penny he gives to labour out of the pockets of the great mass of British workmen when he puts it on their tea, tobacco, and beer, on their food, on their sugar, he has to be careful what he does. That very principle of looking for efficiency obtains just as much in the relations of labour to capital as in any other department of the Army, and I think the State ought not to be benevolent in expenditure of public money even in the matter of wages. We want to be model employers but not extravagant employers. It must be remembered that there are certain advantages in being in the service of the State. These things must be taken into account. That once being granted, these principles being conceded, I for one am anxious and ready to confer on all these questions with the representatives of labour, not merely those inside the House, but those outside. We cannot accept abstract principles without having their practical application worked out. It is sometimes said we should pay the trade union rate of wages. Often there is no trade union except the trade union of the people in the Government employment, and then your principle gives you no help whatever. In other cases the trade union rate is the same as that of the district, and the course is plainly to take the trade union rate in that case. All these matters have to be considered in the concrete. Much controversy need not have arisen if these cases had been so considered. I propose to encourage conference in the matters directly with myself or with those who are responsible to me in the position of directors, and perhaps we should try to organise a small business and informal and elastic Committee to which I hope to refer such questions when they arise. These things will be more properly dealt with in detail at a later stage. The same general principles of economy, the same necessity for clear thinking which applies in the organisation of the Army itself, apply to the relations of capital and labour.

The education of our officers is a great question. General Sir John French made a speech in London the other day, in which he dwelt on the desirability of connecting the Universities more closely with the education of our officers. That may be very difficult in detail, but in principle it ought not to be difficult. I have noticed in our new Universities with delight, degrees established in special sciences. Why should there not be a B.Sc. degree in the science of war? A part of the study must consist in work at some military school close to the University. Sympathising, as I do, with the growth of the scientific spirit among the officers of the Army, I look forward to the time when such University education will play a larger part in the training of the officer. It may be convenient to say now that we are impressed with the rather hard condition of the average officer at the present time. His rate of pay has not increased with the rate of pay of the soldier; and, although the finances do not allow us to be generous, we can do some little things, among them this—the officer's wife and family will in future have free conveyance if the officer is sent away on duty. Another little thing is that the travelling allowance of subalterns and captains will in future be the same as that of the field officers. The small difference—the difference between 12s. 6d. and 15s.—is provided for in the present Estimates.

I shall be asked two questions—one as to the field gun, the other as to the short rifle. I have a strong view that our field guns should cease to be antiquated. We are pushing on the armament of the troops at home with the field gun, and by May 31st two Army Corps, arithmetically measured, the Aldershot real Army Corps and the other nominal Army Corps, will be completely armed. As regard the short rifle, I have consulted the best expert opinion, and the reports are unanimous that on the balance the short rifle is the best weapon. We all know it has certain disadvantages; but its merits outweigh them, and the troops are being rapidly armed with it.

I have concluded what I have to say. In general, the broad lesson of the present position seems to me to be that we must see where the problem of expenditure lies. I once heard a memorable speech of Lord Beaconsfield's in which he said the key of India lay not in Kabul, nor in Kandahar, but in London. It seems to me the lesson we have to derive from the study of the Army problem is just the reverse. The key to the reduction of expenditure does not lie in London. We can cut down the size of the Regular force, as it is here, to a limited extent without touching things abroad. We can probably save in a variety of directions. We are working at that, I pledge myself to the House, as closely as anybody could work. But the real key to the reduction of Army expenditure lies in policy abroad, and, as I have said before, in India and in the Colonies; and that proposition I commend to the consideration of the House. Ten years ago the pay of the Army was £5,500,000. To-day it is nearly double. What is the reason? Mainly the increase abroad. Ten years ago there were seventy-four battalions abroad. To-day there are eighty-five. Is it possible to shrink this vast and costly organisation? Yes, I think so, if that skeleton of expansion of which I have spoken is lying behind, which will become a very real expansion in time of national emergency, and which, until a time of national emergency, need not be made a real expansion. If the Colonies would follow suit with the creation of a potential Army, and if it was possible that an empire with many millions of people might raise potential forces of such a character as would make great strength a certainty for generations to come, no Power could wage war with a people with such possibilities behind it. No opposing nation would know what it had to confront when it got to close grips with an angry people fighting for liberty and for all it held dear.

This Parliament seems to me to have a great chance. We have a magnificent driving power. We have a mission, it seems to me, in this matter of Army reorganisation. The people are not in antipathy to the Army. They love the Army. They care about these things. But they want to put them on a footing in which they believe. They want to get the Army into a shape which will make them feel that it is their own Army, an institution of which they are proud and which they can hold in the same esteem in which they hold the Navy. We wish to take the controversy about the Army, if possible, out of the lines of those things which are matters of reproach to be hurled across the floor of the House at us and back again; we wish to have them made as much matters of national business as the Navy and foreign politics. I have outlined no scheme to-night. I have merely thrown out ideas which have resulted from such study as I have so far made of the subject. I may be wrong in thinking that progress is possible along those lines; but I do not think I am. All the expert opinion encourages me in the conviction that it is along these lines, and these lines alone, that the problem can be solved. Two things it wants—driving power, which we have here, and continuity of policy, which depends for its attainment on your moderation. Do not force me to handle the Army rapidly. Do not force upon me things which I could not do, and which I would rather resign my office than try to do, some things which have been talked of and which would not only lead to injury of the Army but would lead at once to a reaction so strong that probably in the end it would hurl the Party to which I belong out of office and would lead to the bringing back of those who, impelled by angry opinion outside, would take steps too violently reactionary. It is only by a policy of moderation that you can get continuity of policy; and it is only by continuity of policy that you can cut down the cost of this vast and enormous organisation with which we have to deal. I think the Army problem has been studied too much apart from its social and non-military aspects, from the aspect in which it touches the life of the country, from the aspect in which it touches tradition and sentiment. All this you have to bring on your side if you would solve the problem. The problem is, after all, a lay problem. Underneath the technicalities of military organisation and military problems you find there lies some big question of common sense on which the layman may pronounce. I commend to the House the duty of reflecting and working on these lines even in the elementary stage to which I have been able to bring them on this occasion. Ours is a great opportunity; and if you who sit around me, and you who sit opposite me, will but join hands in a national endeavour, then I for my part promise that I will do the utmost, to the final limit of my strength, to prevent our joint endeavour from being paralysed by anything like Party bitterness.

Motion made and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."

*MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER (Croydon): I am certain that I am expressing not only my individual opinion, but the opinion of every one on this side of the House, when I tender to the right hon. Gentleman my respectful congratulations for the most admirable and interesting speech with which he has gratified us. He has made an appeal which I am sure has not fallen on deaf ears. The right hon. Gentleman desires that the Army question shall be taken out of the sphere of Party politics, and believes he can count on hon. Members on the Opposition side to assist him in his endeavour. I will be the foremost to say and do anything to assist the right hon. Gentleman. I ventured to give him that assurance long before I knew that I should be in a Party so reduced in number as this is, and I repeat now that if by my knowledge or my forbearance I can in any way assist the right hon. Gentleman and make his task easier I shall indeed be glad. I have served a hard apprenticeship in this matter, and have been the subject of criticism which has sometimes seemed informed by Party view and personal prejudice rather than by a clear desire for the national welfare; but I believe the right hon. Gentleman will have not only good-will, but good fortune. The right hon. Gentleman comes to his task with the authority conferred by a great majority, with a personality acceptable to the House, and with a great driving power behind him, and he has done wisely in not hastening on the path he has decided to tread. He suggested, but I do not think he meant it as a reproach, and I do not think it is a reproach to us, that others had not been so cautious in this matter.

I would remind the right hon. Gentleman that there is a very remarkable difference between the position in which he stands and that in which his two predecessors stood when called upon to deal with Army matters. My predecessor had to deal with the Army at the close of a devastating war, and to meet all the problems which it presented; and when I took office I was absolutely compelled to act at once, for the Army was disappearing. It was impossible for me or any one in my place to stand still and do nothing. Something had to be done at once, and if nothing had been done the Army would now have to be recreated from the beginning. Now the right hon. Gentleman is in a more convenient position: he proposes to leave things *in status quo*. He can afford to do so at present, he says, and says truly that the Army was never better in personnel or organisation. The right hon. Gentleman finds an Army Council formed on a principle of which he approves; he finds a large and growing force of long service infantry; he finds recruiting steadily progressing, and the long-service enlistment very large. He finds the garrison artillery full up, he finds 600 of the new field guns ready to his hand, the cavalry remounted, the officers who were wanting for the most part supplied, and a new system of Staff organisation set up, a system which I feel confident we can depend upon him to apply. With all these beginnings it is not wonderful that the right hon. Gentleman should, after two years of the existing system, be able to do what his predecessor was unable to do, and to take time before making any further change. I will guarantee that in another year and a half the right hon. Gentleman, if he is still in the same mind and will be content to let things alone, will have a force such as this country has never seen before.

With the general propositions laid down by the right hon. Gentleman I am in general agreement, and I consider that the most important of his statements is that he intends to apply to the Army the same rule as has been applied to the Navy, and to get rid of everything that is not absolutely necessary for success in war. If he does that nothing more can be asked of the right hon. Gentleman's administration, and I shall have nothing to complain of. That rule ought to be the basis of all Army organisation, and directly we begin to neglect it waste begins. The right hon. Gentleman said that what was wanted more than anything else was clear thinking; but I am not sure that in every respect the right hon. Gentleman observed his own counsel. In spite of all his lucidity and the great care he took to inform the House, there were one or two instances in which the right hon. Gentleman did not, as it appeared to me, seem to think so clearly as we should have liked. He spoke of the enormous effect which the acceptance of the blue-water school principle must have on the re-organisation of the Army, and he drew from that premiss conclusions which were inevitable. He told us that the work of the Army was not to provide for the defence of this country but service abroad. That is a doctrine with which I cordially agree. I think he attached perhaps too much importance to some of the new departures which even in the short time he had been in office he had been able to consider and which he was actually making. The proposal to do away with the London defences is not new. It was a conclusion arrived at some time ago by the Committee of Defence. And I remember well an Order being issued cancelling the appropriation of all the guns for those defences. Upon the small matter with regard to St. Helena we are all agreed. It was settled long ago. In respect of the survey, the saving to the nation will be infinitesimal. I associate myself to the full with what the right hon. Gentleman has said about the growth of a school of young officers who have made a serious study of their profession, and who are willing to use their knowledge for the benefit of the nation.

A greater liberty of transference from one part of the Army to another will give these officers such an opportunity of professional service as has not been possible before. On all these points there is general agreement.

But when the right hon. Gentleman spoke of the inadvisability of change, and the value of a continuous policy, and to prove his point referred to the Navy he was not very impressive. I am not sure that the parallel drawn with the Navy is quite legitimate. It is true in a sense but not quite true. A policy for the Navy is a thing of modern growth. I can remember when there was no policy, and when in an emergency the Admiralty could not send five fresh ships to sea. And while naval policy is now continuous, it is subject to extraordinary changes. Within the last three years the Navy has undergone a change far more drastic than any proposed for the Army. There has been also a change in Army policy; but rightly it has been the consequence of the development of a strong Navy. Until that strong Navy existed the present Army policy was an impossibility.

There is only one matter on which there is likely to be a serious difference of opinion between the right hon. Gentleman and myself, and in that matter the right hon. Gentleman was, I think, somewhat inconsistent with his own admonition to think clearly. The right hon. Gentleman said that he looked forward to a great change in the body from which the Regular Army was was to be reinforced in time of war. I quite agree. No doubt retrenchment in the Regular Army must come, and it can only be effected by destroying battalions or by reducing their establishment. I shall continue to advocate the naval plan of having skeletons, which can be easily expanded in time of war. The right hon. Gentleman was wrong in supposing that no estimates has been formed of the force necessary to be kept up in time of peace. That force varies with one factor—the troops to be maintained in India and the Colonies. Given that factor, the rest can be deduced, and has, as a matter of fact been deduced.

The right hon. Gentleman seemed to lapse from his usually clear thinking when he said that we must have vast crowds of semi-organised men in this country who are to be used in time of war. He cannot have been thinking quite clearly, because he has already told us in the clearest manner possible that the war contemplated is not a war inside this country at all. Then what was the particular point of quoting General Chanzy's campaign? The right hon. Gentleman said that General Manteuffel was greatly embarrassed by having large numbers of semi-organised men hanging on his flank. Probably he was; but the lesson which the right hon. Gentleman drew from that war is not quite so reassuring to me as it is to the right hon. Gentleman. After all, the French forces outnumbered the Germans; they were fighting with all the advantage of possessing this irregular contingent; yet in a few weeks, despite their gallantry and their numbers, they were routed, Paris was compelled to surrender, and France was compelled to sign a disastrous peace. Where then is the parallel to the circumstances which surrounded General Chanzy's fight? Are we to fight, let us say, for the neutrality of Belgium, if that should be our fate, or elsewhere outside these islands, and to take with us these bands of irregular troops?

*Mr. HALDANE: I was only pointing out that, if we had a large reserve of what I call semi-trained people in this country, experience shows that with the proper machinery they can be converted far more rapidly into effective fighting people than if they are not trained at all.

*Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER: I am sure I do not desire to misrepresent the right hon. Gentleman, but I fail to see what is the value of the analogy drawn from the campaign on the Loire, for clearly the advantage of General Chanzy arose from having large numbers of undisciplined men for the assistance of the Regular Army.

But I will drop that analogy and take up a much more serious line of criticism. There has been a good deal of discussion lately as to our having in this country so few men trained in the use of arms. Lord Roberts has said that if we had 1,000,000 men on whom we could draw, men trained to the use of arms, we should be very fortunate. Again, Sir Ian Hamilton the other day contrasted the condition of things in this country with that in Japan. He told us of the number of men in a party of Japanese civilians who had been trained to use the rifle, and declared that no such case could be found here. But this belief, so unfavourable to us, rests upon no foundation. At this moment of time we are paying for no less than 960,000 Englishmen to bear arms in time of peace, and on the most moderate estimate there must be well over 4,000,000 people in this country who have been trained at the cost of the State to use the rifle. This is an enormous number, and yet it is true, as the right hon. Gentleman said, that our Army is not organised for war; from that I deduce the conclusion that it is not enough to have great crowds of men who have received this preliminary training to guarantee us against disaster in war. I think we are travelling in rather a dangerous path. This idea of what may be called second-best armies is very dangerous. The second-best fleet lies now at the bottom of the Sea of Japan, and the second-best army was destroyed on the plains of Liau-yang and Mukden. I would like to know whether there is any military authority —I do not ask for any names—for the proposition that you can safely enter upon modern warfare with a reasonable chance of success with an army constituted in the way suggested by the right hon. Gentleman.

*MR. HALDANE: I never said that we should fight with an army in that condition. What I said was that, if we had that kind of organisation with the period of training divided into two parts, we would be able to produce a very large supporting and contributory force.

*MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: It is undoubtedly true that in ordinary circumstances we should have some notice and breathing time, but, granting all the advantages due to that circumstance, there must be such an enormous difference between any army constituted on those lines and the armies considered necessary to secure success in other countries that there can be no comparison. I will ask where is the right hon. Gentleman going to get his officers for these hundreds of thousands of men who will possess no officers trained in the modern sense at all. You are apparently to have everything which in other countries is considered unsuitable for carrying on of a successful war. I know that we are an insular people and that we are proud of our insular position and insular ideas, but sometimes when I find the whole world against us I am inclined to think that the whole world may be right and that we may be wrong. No other country in the world holds the views that we hold on this question. Every other country thinks that if you are to obtain victory in war, you must have two years training of all men taken from the flower of the population, and that those men must be trained by officers who have given a lifetime to their work; and that in order to take the field you must have all the proportions of an army with equipment to correspond. We take a totally different view. If it be really possible to produce an army which can fight outside this country against the best modern troops of the world, and can succeed after having had a training such as the right hon. Gentleman has described, and officered as such an army must be officered, then I say it is the greatest discovery ever made. If it is true I congratulate the right hon. Gentleman. I think it is splendid. I hope it is true. But if it be not true, if other countries are right and we are wrong, then what will happen? If the scheme is carried out it will be the most popular thing, I suppose, that was ever done in this country; but if when we have a war this army is destroyed, I do not think the popularity of the scheme will give us much consolation. The military opinion that I have been able to ascertain does not justify the conclusion that the view of the right hon. Gentleman is a right view. I will quote Lord Roberts' opinion, as given before the Royal Commission. Lord Roberts was asked whether he would employ a Militia battalion, and the reply was—

> "Certainly I would not employ a battalion that I was not so sure of as regards training in the same prominent position as I should employ a Regular battalion."

Then he was asked—

"Do you think they would be up to the standard required for meeting an invasion, supposing it were to arise?"

The reply was—

"No, for they would be pitted against the very best troops that could be brought here."

Sir Ian Hamilton was asked whether, if the Militia were trained for six months on enlistment and underwent their month's training in subsequent years, with their shooting training as well, they would be fit for the fighting line. His answer was that it could only be a matter of opinion, and he added—

"But I would prefer to use them to relieve Regular troops in garrisons and coaling stations, rather than to rely upon them to take the field."

Lord Wolseley said he thought that if they were asked to fight with such troops they had better make peace. Asked if it might not be possible to bring them into a condition to fight with reasonable prospect of success, he said—

"Certainly, but then you would have to give them a corresponding amount of training to make them equal to the Regular soldier."

He was next asked how long it would take to make 300,000 auxiliaries equal to cope with 200,000 highly-trained Regulars. He said—

"I think the best answer I can give you is the answer that a German officer would give you—what the Germans exact from their men before they turn them into the Reserve; if you wish to have men capable of fighting as Regular soldiers you have to train them as the Germans do, and keep them for eighteen months or two years and then turn them away, and have them up for periodical trainings annually."

Sir John French was asked—

"Would you be satisfied to meet those troops with our Auxiliary Forces after a year's training?"

He replied—

"I should think it would be very risky. 'You would prefer not?' 'I should prefer not.'"

he answered.

The next question was—

"After what period do you think you would be satisfied to do so?"

The answer was—

"A period that would make them equal to Regular troops."

I might continue the recital almost indefinitely. I do hope the right hon. Gentleman will at some time or another give us his reasons for believing that the Continental—in fact I may say the universal—view is wrong. That is what it comes to. If we are to leave our troops unorganised in every way, unofficered, and are never to train them in the way troops ought to be trained in order to win victory in battle, will the right hon. Gentleman tell the House whence he has obtained sanction for his opinions that this can be done wisely or safely?

I cannot help raising this one note of protest, and it is the only note of protest I desire to utter at this stage of the discussion, because I feel that the vagueness—no doubt the reasonable and pardonable vagueness of the picture—is calculated to raise a considerable amount of alarm in the minds of those who feel that we want an organisation much more resembling that of the Navy than that which he has described. The Navy has never taken the view that you can sacrifice quality for quantity. It is true that we have introduced short service in the Navy, but of not less than five years, and the number of men under that scheme does not exceed 5,000. I do trust that the right hon. Gentleman will pause before he commits this country to any reduction of the Regular Army until he is prepared to say with perfect confidence in this House what he is going to offer in its place. I congratulate the right hon. Gentleman upon what he has said as to improving the education and the organisation of the general staff of the Army, for, undoubtedly, there is room for improvement.

The right hon. Gentleman has told the House that he has closed short-service enlistments. I regret the fact—but I note with satisfaction that unlike many others who speak with less authority, he did not say that it was closed because short-service enlistment had proved a failure. Short-service enlistment was a very great success during the short time it was open, and no less than 54 per cent. of the recruits enlisted for short service. If you do desire to open short-service recruiting again, you may do so with perfect confidence that you will obtain the recruits; but that there must be short service recruiting is absolutely certain. The thing must happen, because you cannot keep on indefinitely a Regular Army on a long-service basis alone consistently with any considerable reduction of the Army Estimates. You must, sooner or later, come back to the short-service enlistment in some shape or another. I venture once more to assure the right hon. Gentleman—with the exception of the one point which I have ventured to suggest—that on every other line which he desires to make progress he will have in me a supporter who knows his difficulties, who sympathises with him, who shares his view as to the general directions upon which we ought to progress, and one who will be his ardent well-wisher, and whose chief desire is that he may obtain a larger measure of success than his predecessor.

MAJOR SEELY congratulated the Secretary for War upon the speech which he had made. He felt sure that if he carried out the intentions which he had expressed to the House he would receive that general support for which he had pleaded. The right hon. Gentleman who had just sat down seemed very anxious to earn the title "friend of the Volunteers," but his whole argument would be of value if he followed it up by proposing a system of continental conscription. Circumstances might arise where a great force would be required, and the number had been placed by some at 1,000,000 men and by others at 500,000. How could we possibly raise that number except by continental conscription, or unless we relied upon the voluntary offerings of a free people, or unless the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Croydon was prepared to say that we must maintain such a Regular force in peace time as would provide them with the Regular force they would require in time of war to conduct a great European war.

*MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER said he had said nothing whatever about the Volunteers, but that he had, as a matter of fact, endeavoured to use the Volunteer material for the purposes of war. What he referred to was that sort of nebulous force which the Secretary for War was about to call into being.

MAJOR SEELY said he understood that the late Secretary of State for War was the friend of the Volunteer, but at any rate, he was not friendly to a large force of Volunteers. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Croydon's object had been to reduce the Volunteers, to go in the contrary direction to that which had been pointed out by the Secretary of State for War, and to make the Volunteers approximate more nearly to the Regular Army, and so to rely upon only Regular troops. Certain hon. Members had pleaded again and again in this House for this object, and at last they had heard some result of their words. They had continually argued that it was impossible for this country to maintain a huge Navy and Army adequate to our needs, and they urged that whilst they must have an Army for immediate needs they must have also behind them the patriotic service of the whole people. That could not be obtained by compulsion, because the people of this country would never submit to being compelled to serve in the Army. The people of this country had determined to keep in their own hands the question whether they should or should not go to war, and for that reason they insisted upon voluntary service, not from any sense of cowardice, but because they were determined that when the time came they should be allowed to decide whether they would wage war or not. For that reason he believed that it was only by encouragement and not by compulsion that we could obtain the forces which we required. He urged the right hon. Gentleman not to pursue the course which proved so disastrous last year, for he believed that the recent election had shown that the people of this country were determined that they would maintain the voluntary principle; and it was only by encouragement on the lines he had suggested that the authorities could hope to obtain any large number of men. Whilst thanking the Secretary of State for War, might he put in one caveat on the question of the linked battalion system. Members sympathised and agreed so entirely with his general view that it would seem churlish to sound a note of disagreement; but he thought it was as well to point out this difference at once. They protested against the theory that it was necessary to have the same proportion of Regular troops at home as abroad. When Mr. Cardwell's system was produced it was a great advance upon previous schemes, and it so happened that at that time the number of troops at home and abroad were about the same. They were now of the opinion that they wanted far more troops abroad than at home for various reasons, and still more because of the acceptance by the late Prime Minister on behalf of the Committee of Defence of the theory that the defence of this country was an affair of its citizens. For these reasons they believed that we did not require so great a force of Regular troops in this country. He did not agree with the statement that this was an essential part of military doctrine. With regard to the possible invasion of this country he had never been one who believed that any naval force was a complete security against invasion. In uttering a note of warning, he wished to point out that the belief that the naval force was a complete security was based upon expert opinion. If that naval opinion had ever been very gravely at fault, it behoved them to doubt whether they could run so huge a risk upon a hypothesis which might conceivably be wrong. The whole of naval opinion a few years ago was devoted to trying to ascertain which would win, the Japanese or the Russian Navy; and he had it on good authority that some of this expert opinion, which told them invasion was impossible, gave the Japanese Fleet three months before the Russian Fleet sent it to the bottom. He believed that in the archives of the War Office some such opinion was to be found. On a previous occasion he had pointed out many instances where naval expert opinion had been wholly wrong, and he ventured to bring this most important question to the notice of the House, not because he did not belong to the blue-water school, or because he did not believe that we ought to spend much more money on the Navy than on the Army, but because he was of opinion that invasion was like being run over by an express train: it was fatal when it happened. It was unwise to assume that a thing was impossible because the probabilities seemed to be against it. But, after all, the Secretary of State for War longed to see the people of this country serve in the Army of their own free will; and all who had endeavoured to recruit men for the Auxiliary Forces knew that the defence of the soil argument was the principal incentive to voluntary service. When, therefore, there was the least chance of this training being developed it was unwise to take away the great inducement to that voluntary service, which might in the future be of great value in all parts of the world. He had nothing in the nature of criticism to make in regard to the statement made by the Secretary of State for War, and Members were grateful for what he had said. The right hon. Gentleman had made an impassioned appeal to the people of this country and to hon. Members of this House to set aside Party bitterness, and all hoped that his appeal would be responded to.

*Lord MORPETH (Birmingham, S.) said the Secretary of State for War had very wisely preferred to wait to learn the facts of his office before he came down to this House to ask for any wide changes in the organisation of the Army. They were told that it was easy to diminish the armed forces because at the present time there was a large increase in treaties of arbitration. He did not think this country could rely on any security of that sort. If France, instead of strengthening her Army in past years, had reduced her forces he thought the deadlock which appeared to exist at Algeciras would be even greater than it was. But the right hon. Gentleman had told the House that it was impossible to diminish the Army, at any rate materially, until the authorities were able to relieve the Indian and Colonial garrisons—that meant until some change of policy abroad in regard to the north-west frontier of India, or in regard to the position in South Africa, enabled them to diminish those forces. When that happened it would no doubt be possible to diminish the troops in those regions. Sometimes the House heard lamentations as to the large cost of the armed forces of this country. It seemed to him that there was no good in lamenting that expenditure had risen, and was rising, without also seeing whether they could diminish the cost with security to this country. It was not the cost alone that they had to look to, but the facts that underlay the necessity for that cost. The right hon. Gentleman had said that they must rely on the large force which would stand behind the striking force. It seemed to him that the right hon. Gentleman placed too much reliance on a rather vague force that might be called into being. At one time he seemed to hint that this force would be organised by local bodies—county councils, municipal authorities, or even private associations. Everybody who took an interest in the strength of the Army must welcome institutions like rifle clubs and rejoice that the people of the country were taking an interest in what was, after all, the A.B.C. of military matters—the ability to shoot straight. But, unfortunately, they had to look at the facts of our social life as they were. It was unfortunately the fact that football was more interesting than shooting at the butts. That being so, they must provide some military machinery, some military organisation, by which men who were to be taught shooting would be enrolled in order to qualify themselves as marksmen. It seemed to him that the right hon. Gentleman made a mistake in the instance he chose for the purpose of showing the advantages and the uses of a large number of unorganised troops or bodies of men. He quoted Prince Frederick Charles and what might be called the national war in France, when organised resistance had broken down. In that case the resistance, although gallant and prolonged, and although it inflicted great loss on the Prussians, had no eventual bearing on the result of the war. We should look in this country to the forces we had rather than to ill-defined forces which did not exist. He did not disguise from himself the fact that at the present moment the Auxiliary Forces were in many respects ill-trained, ill-qualified, and unready to meet European troops of quality in the field of battle. Large numbers of Volunteers and Militia were sent to South Africa during the late war. Although ready to give them praise for what they did and to recognise the patriotism and spirit which led them to go to the field of operations, everybody who had any experience of those troops knew that if, instead of going to South Africa to meet comparatively few brave but ill-equipped men, they had had to meet in an easier country the highly trained and disciplined Armies of Continental Powers, many of those troops would have fared very badly. But the fact that men were not ready to go at a moment's notice was no reason why they should not be made ready, as the right hon. Gentleman had pointed out. If instead of relying upon some ill-defined force the War Office would devote some of its benevolence—some of its attention—to the strengthening of the Auxiliary Forces, whether Volunteer or Militia, he thought there would be found in them an almost inexhaustible reserve force which might be extended in time of war to very large dimensions. There they had a skeleton which they could fill out into a living organism for war. The relative value of the Volunteers and the Militia was a question which was sometimes discussed. These discussions were unfortunate. He doubtep whether it was possible to keep two Auxiliary Forces, organised on different principles, in being. But it would be perfectly possible to create a single Auxiliary Force, whether it were called Militia or Volunteers, which would be one force under military law, but with certain conditions of elasticity in regard to terms of enlistment, nature and length of training, and even in regard to pay. What stood in the way of the Auxiliary Forces at the present time ? The Volunteers considered, rightly or wrongly, that they had been slighted. What was certain was that the Militia, throughout the whole course of its career, had been little better than a step-child of the military authorities of this country. It had always been the Cinderella of the armed forces, and he did not suppose there was any reasonable Militiaman who expected that it could ever develop into the favourite child of the War Office. But he did say that the Militia was capable of expansion and improvement, and that it was a force which could be polished up at comparatively short notice if it were favoured by the War Office. If it received the assistance to which it was entitled it would be a valuable service. The

Militia had been bled of its best and steadiest men to supply troops for the line under the so-called system of the Militia reserve now abolished. It had been bled at the other end by being made a nursery of recruits. It was a force which had always been regarded with a certain amount of ridicule. The fact that it should have lived down this ridicule showed its vitality. In the time of the great Napoleonic wars it provided a vast number of men who were not only available for home defence but actually served in the field in the line battalions; during the Crimean War it provided men for the Mediterranean garrisons, and during the South African War it provided organised units to fill up the gaps when there was difficulty in finding Regulars or Volunteers to supply the deficiency. This showed that they had in the Militia that skeleton or nucleus to which the Secretary of State for War referred. The right hon. Gentleman alluded with approval to the Swiss Militia. That was a cheap Militia and service was compulsory. It was a Militia for the defence of its own native soil. The Swiss people were one of the most democratic and one of the freest nations in the world, but in spite of that they had a great history of military glory and pride. What the Swiss had done surely the people of this country were sufficiently patriotic to do also. It was not proposed that the Army which was to stand behind the Regular Army should be for foreign service. It was an Army for the defence of this country, and only in emergencies for foreign service. While the view taken by the Blue Water School contained a great element of truth, it might sometimes be pushed to a dangerous extreme—an extreme which in the days of Queen Elizabeth was called the idolatry of Neptune. He did not think this country could afford to say that it would rely altogether on the Fleet. It was not probable that an enemy would be able to invade this country in great numbers, but unless the Auxiliary Forces were properly organised and equipped, and under commanders who understood the material with which they had to deal and who were able to use them, they would prove a helpless crowd in the presence of more highly organised Armies if they came into conflict. Although he agreed with the right hon. Gentleman about the necessity of building a military policy on certain clearly defined lines, it must always be borne in mind that this country was exposed to the danger of sudden attack. It was just those military ventures which appeared most hopeless, which most military officers shrank from, that daring spirits undertook and which led to the most startling success. The attack on Quebec had been practically given up as hopeless by every naval and military member of the British forces, but General Wolfe made it a startling and wonderful success. For that reason this country must be prepared with some organised force to meet invasion in time of war. He remembered that during the war in South Africa, although we were in conflict with only a small State thousands of miles away and with no Fleet, there was a deep feeling of insecurity in this county. All recollected the hasty, ill-considered and expensive measures that were then thought necessary to supply deficiencies. If we were ever to engage in a war with a great military Power it was essential for the security and stability of the country that there should be here an organised force. It was said, and he agreed, that this country could not support an overwhelming Navy and at the same time provide a great Army, that our professional Army should be small but of great efficiency, and that behind that we should look to the great mass of the Auxiliary Forces, who, therefore, should be treated with benevolence and encouragement. The officers and men were willing to learn and to qualify themselves for the duty put upon them if they only received that encouragement from professional soldiers and the War Office which was their due.

* Mr. CHARLES HOBHOUSE (Bristol E.) said it was a very long time since they had had a speech from any Minister on the subject of the Army which had elicited such a general feeling of contentment and approbation as the one they had listened to this afternoon. The right hon. Gentleman, in opening his speech, told the House that three months was far too short a time to produce a new scheme of

reform of the Army; but he could not help remembering that on almost the corresponding day last year the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Croydon made a speech in which at the end of seven months he produced a full-fledged scheme for the reform of every department of the British Army. He was not going to deal with the scheme which the right hon. Gentleman then produced, the most important parts of which had been swept away by the Memorandum which the present Secretary of State for War had laid on the Table of the House; but there were one or two points in connection with that scheme which must inevitably come up in any discussion of the proposals of the present Secretary of State for War. The right hon. Member for Croydon had told the House that two concurrent periods of enlistment were impossible. Now at the time the right hon. Gentleman gave up office there were not two concurrent periods of enlistment but four, although not all of his making.

*Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER said that what he had stated was that concurrent enlistment was inevitable, and he had always maintained that.

*Mr. CHARLES HOBHOUSE said that he had a quotaion from a speech the right hon. Gentleman made on 8th April last, which appeared in *The Times*, in which he said that it was impossible to proceed with two concurrent periods of enlistment.

*Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER said that for two years he had been preaching and practising exactly the opposite doctrine.

*Mr. CHARLES HOBHOUSE said he was quite aware of that, but it only showed how inconsistent the right hon. Gentleman's theory was with his practice. His point was that when the present Secretary of State for War came into office he found that there were four periods of concurrent enlistment. He was glad to see that the right hon. Gentleman had swept away three of them, and that at present the only possible period of enlistment was one of nine years service with the colours and three in the reserve. There had been unquestionably some feeling of disappointment amongst Members on the Ministerial side of the House that it was possible for the right hon. Gentleman to reduce the expense of the Army by only £17,000. But considering the short time at his disposal and the legacies left him by his predecessors, he thought they should be glad that the present Secretary of State for War had been able to make a reduction of even £17,000. It had to be remembered that the cost of all branches of the Service—especially in the manufacture of guns, clothing, and supplies of all sorts of necessaries—had gone up. The cost of labour and material had largely increased, and all these inevitably helped to swell the Estimates. One thing in the speech of the right hon. Gentleman had pleased him immensely, viz., when the right hon. Gentleman said that although he had some ideas he had no plans, and he went on to express his approval—even if that approval were tentative—of a continuance of what was known as the Cardwell scheme. He himself recollected the time when he was taunted with being the only surviving believer in the Cardwell Scheme, and he was delighted that that view had been re-adopted with the general approval of the House. He was glad that the right hon. Gentleman was going to keep the system of linked battalions, for it was the universal experience that that was the only way to provide proper drafts for the battalions serving abroad. The late Secretary for War had sketched out a plan by which there were to to be brought into existence eighteen or nineteen large depôts, which were in due process of time to replace the linked-battalion system. He wanted to know whether these large depôts with their buildings were to be continued at large cost, or whether they were going to be thrown into the hotch-potch with the London defences. If the right hon. Gentleman followed that course, he was certain that in the immediate future he would be able to add to the saving of expenditure already affected. It was important to notice that the three principles laid down last year by the right hon. Member for Croydon and the late Prime Minister for the maintenance of the Army had been fully answered by the Secretary of State for War.

These were the possibility of invasion, the duty of the Army to fight abroad, and the position in India governing the number of soldiers in this country. He was rather of the opinion of the hon. and gallant Member for the Abercromby Division of Liverpool that the Committee of Defence had minimised the position of foreign armies, and in thinking that the commanders of these armies would not under certain circumstances sacrifice 5,000 or 10,000 men in order to get possession of one or other of our great arsenals. He had seen something of the landward defences of our great arsenals, and was convinced that if by some mischance a force of 10,000 foreign troops were landed in close proximity to, say, Portsmouth or Plymouth, they could do such incalculable and incredible damage as all the strength of our Navy would not be able to redress within a reasonable time. He hoped that any scheme of defence of this country would be so perfect in regard to the repulsion of these possible raids that our arsenals would really rest in genuine and not imaginary security. He should have liked to have referred at a little greater length to the question of whether the defences of India were so good as they were a year ago. He thought that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Croydon laid it down that the requirements of India in time of war were 120,000 men in the first year, and 60,000 in the succeeding year, and he should like to know whether the Secretary for War agreed with those figures. He had not gathered clearly by what method the power of expansion behind the Regular Army was to be provided. The right hon. Gentleman had devised a very extensive and not a very costly scheme of regaining the Volunteers. The system of brigading, however, had not yet been extended to the Militia. The system of this brigading, by which new officers were to be appointed to the Volunteer brigades, had left behind a large number of officers, who were practically in charge of brigade districts and who would now be superfluous. Were those officers going to be used for brigading the Militia, and, if not, under what system was the Militia going to be brought into line with the Volunteers from the point of view of Army organisation? He hailed with much satisfaction the right hon. Gentleman's desire to create a national interest in the Army. There was public sentiment in regard to the Navy, and those who, like himself, had served in the Army, would give anything to see it directed towards the Army. It was a bar to the advance of the Army that it had never been so popular as the Navy, but there was no reason why, under proper management, it should not take its place side by side with naval force.

*MR. WYNDHAM (Dover): Although some of the speeches to which we have listened might tempt me to recrimination, I shall resist that temptation. The Secretary of State has asked us to set all partisan spirit on one side. I respond to the appeal. It would, in my opinion, be ungenerous to do otherwise in view of one memorable sentence in the right hon. Gentleman's speech; I quote it *verbatim*—

> "Never was there a period when the Army was in a more efficient condition than to-day."

That was a legacy of which the right hon. Gentleman does not complain. Again, a great part of his survey was based, as the right hon. Gentleman most frankly and generously admitted, on the conclusions and advice tendered by the Defence Committee, and his theory, if not based upon, almost entirely coincided with, the important speech made last session by the present Leader of the Opposition. But, of course, there may be other legacies, of which the right hon. Gentleman complains, though he has uttered no complaint. He remarked somewhat pointedly that in the period under review in the earlier portion of his speech there had been an increase in the *personnel* of the Army of 46,000 men, and in respect of it an increase of cost to the Army of about £6,000,000. That is £130 per head. But if we take into consideration that during that period a new rifle was given to the Army, and a new gun, that the pay of the soldier was increased, his accommodation improved, and the amenities of his life made far more desirable, I do not think that £130 per man is at any rate obviously an extravagant figure. The whole point is whether the increase in *personnel* was necessary. The Secretary for War will not think that I lack admiration for his speech if I do not pay him all the compliments he deserves. I share to the full the admiration which the right hon. Gentleman's notable effort has excited; it was a luminous speech, which flooded the whole question with light. There was one passage, however, which, perhaps owing to my imperfect attention, seemed to lack the lucidity which characterised the rest of the speech. I will come straight to that portion of the speech, in which lies the heart of the matter.

The right hon. Gentleman dealt with a striking force, its size and character, and then in quick transition dealt with another problem—namely, the fact that the number of men and of battalions which we had at home depended upon and was conditioned by the number of men and of battalions that we had in India and the Colonies. I would myself say that if our Army at home is sufficient to be the nursery and school for our Army in India and in the Colonies, then at no great additional cost we can provide out of that nursery and school a striking force of sufficient size. There are not two problems; there is one dominating problem, that of having a proper nursery and school for our Indian and Colonial garrisons. Until that problem is satisfactorily solved, the problem of a striking force becomes of minor importance; we need not bother our heads about it until we have found the solution of the primary problem. At the end of his speech the right hon. Gentleman said that the key of the problem of reducing expenditure is to be found in the garrisons which we maintain in Colonial stations. But the lock into which that key is to be fitted is by the very nature of our Empire a complicated one with many intricate wards. Hon. Members will find a very good picture of that lock on page 22 of the Army Estimates, where there is given on one sheet of paper the distribution of our Army throughout the Empire. Rightly or wrongly, we have 156 battalions of the Line.

Following the right hon Gentleman's example, I will stick to Infantry of the Line to illustrate the problem. Of those battalions seventy-one are at home, and eighty-five abroad, fifty-two being in India. I agree that all chances of reduction depends on the number of battalions we have out of this country. I should be very sorry to encourage any section of the House to expect a reduction in the Indian garrison; and with that deduction there are thirty-three battalions abroad to be accounted for. We have gone very far in removing the unnecessary garrisons abroad in Canada, Esquimault and Bermuda. If you analyse the position of our battalions throughout the Colonies, excluding India, you will see that the opportunity of any great measure of reduction is very remote. I am not pressing this, but I think it is very important to take it into consideration. The reduction of the three battalions at Gibraltar, and the seven battalions at Malta raises the whole question of the Mediterranean, and I for one cannot hold out any hope to this House that at any early day we are going to abandon those historic stations. There is a view held I know, a highly speculative view in my opinion, that if a war broke out we should clear out of the Mediterranean, and the right hon. Gentleman may have gone some way in favour of the conclusions based on that view. But still the House would be surprised to hear that we are going to have less than three battalions at Gibraltar and seven at Malta.

Then we come to another group, which I may call the Egyptian group, to which we may add the garrisons at Cyprus and Crete; there you have four battalions. I put it to the House that those four battalions do not only touch the question of the fighting efficiency of the Army, they are also a point of support to many important diplomatic questions, and we cannot on this Question, as I think the right hon. Gentleman will admit, deal with our Army problems as Germany can deal with her Army problem. Some of our Colonial garrisons are an inherent part of our diplomatic machinery and cannot be tampered with without altering the whole course of our foreign policy. I pass at this stage to another group, namely, the battalions at Mauritius, Bermuda, the Straits Settlements, Hong Kong and Ceylon —five battalions in all. The right hon. Gentleman is prepared to push the conclusions of the blue water school very far. I invented the name, quite accidentally, in this House, and I am prepared to go a long way with it, but I do not think the right hon. Gentleman can go the whole way. But supposing he could, there is a reduction of five battalions to be obtained there, and we

Mr. Wyndham.

should have no garrisons in the Far East. Again, those battalions cannot be discussed from the point of view of fighting efficiency, it might be wrong or it might be right to have one battalion of white troops at Hong-Kong, but it cannot be said that it was an absurd view to take, that we need one such battalion there as the *point d'appui* for the whole of our diplomatic position in the Pacific.

But if hon. Gentlemen have taken account of the Mediterranean battalions and the five garrisons in our world's service and the four battalions in Egypt, there remain the fourteen battalions in South Africa. I ask the House, is it practical to contemplate at the present moment any reduction of those battalions? [Cries of Yes.] Well, that is one of the questions we shall have to consider at the invitation of the Secretary of State for War, but I think I have in this matter put forward a presumptive case that only in South Africa is there a chance—a remote chance which we must not speculate too confidently upon—of a reduction being effected. The whole increase of the cost of the Army is in the main due to additional burdens which have become incumbent upon us in recent years, which have necessitated our having garrisons in these places. For a time the problem was settled in an illusory manner. The word "temporary" used to be bracketted against the battalions in Egypt, but those battalions have been in Egypt ever since, and the right hon. Gentleman will not solve the problem, and I am sure by his candour to-night he will not pretend to do so, by putting the word "temporary" against the fourteen battalions in South Africa. If he finds it impossible, as I fear he will, to take away any considerable number of these thirty-three battalions, then the hope of any great economy in the cost of the Army is one which we cannot confidently entertain. The recent additions to our Army cost us £130 per annum per man, and for the considerations that I have shown, if the Government do cut down the cost by three or five battalions they will not get the Cardwell system, of which the right hon. Gentleman seems to approve, to work as it was intended to work. Some of us think the Cardwell system has been exposed to a strain that it will not bear, and if we are to have clear thinking upon this matter we must either recognise that the Cardwell system must be carried out theoretically, according to the intentions of its author, or else we must have some other system which will admit of our having more battalions abroad than are kept at home.

I do not intend to make a Party speech or to take up much more of the time of the House, but, speaking for myself and probably for others as well, I am not persuaded that the right hon. Gentleman is on the right track in respect to the Militia. The right hon. Gentleman takes the view that the Militia is to be kept in a watertight compartment, divorced from our line infantry, and many share that view. I can only say that under these conditions the Militia is perishing, and I do not see in these conditions any element for the revival of it. Although it is not my place to throw out any suggestions to-night, I think it would be wise to revert to the old principle advocated for the Militia of 100 years ago, namely, that it should be regarded as a provisional battalion closely connected with the territorial regiments. We might defend this principle on the ground both of prestige and tradition. At present our country has two traditions, the old tradition of the numbers of the regiments and the new territorial tradition which came to life during the war in South Africa. Before the war it would have been impossible to make the Hampshire Militia believe they were part and parcel of the Hampshire regiment, but since the war it is quite different. I commend that suggestion to the right hon. Gentleman.

The right hon. Gentleman said no word about the Yeomanry. May I put in a word of appeal that he will devote his zeal to every other portion of the forces before he deals with the Yeomanry. In that case, I ask him with respect to leave well alone. I rose only to draw attention to a part of the right hon. Gentleman's speech which, perhaps, through some fault of my own, did not seem so clear as the greater part of his address.

The right hon. Gentleman dealt, it seemed to me, somewhat too hardly with the building of barracks on Salisbury

Plain. Again, there are two sides to the question, and a good deal might be said for and against it. Salisbury Plain was bought as a manœuvring ground. It has been turned into a second Aldershot and into a collection of rifle and artillery ranges. I regret that, but why was it done? It was done because we had to have new barracks in this country. The old barracks were a disgrace and were admitted to be so. Many had to be pulled down, and our military advisers recommended that barracks should be built so that the troops of different branches of the service could be exercised together. Then the science of economy came in. It was found far cheaper to build these barracks upon ground belonging to you than to buy new land. Much can be said on both sides of the question, but I shall always lean to the opinion that it will be better to leave Salisbury Plain as clear as you can, and that when you have a great manœuvring area you should allow no consideration of economy to lead you to turn it into anything else.

On the question of the Volunteers the right hon. Gentleman threw out the theory that we should have elementary instruction of an elastic character until a time of war. That was so important and far-reaching a view that, I think, we may well ponder it before we pronounce any opinion upon it; but I will admit that it is a logical deduction from the extreme theories of the Blue-water school. Let me say one word to those who represent the Volunteers in this House. Why do the Volunteers now cost so much more than they did? Because Mr. Stanhope, Lord Lansdowne, and others were exposed year after year to the demand that the Volunteers should have all the necessaries and all the accessories of Regular troops—their own transport, their own guns, and much besides. If you do that you cannot make the process of elementary training elastic without at the same time making it grossly extravagant; and we come to the bed-rock of the volunteer question, which is that you cannot train large bodies of troops in this country, except during periods of great patriotic exaltation, when you are not permitted to deviate from the high road without paying a bill almost as costly as any run up in time of war.

Mr. MOLTENO (Dumfriesshire) said he wished to refer to the position in which many Members were placed by the speech of the Secretary of State for War and the Estimates which had been placed before the country. They had been returned with a strong mandate from their constituents to retrench and cut down expenditure. They had also been returned with a mandate for social reform. He listened with the greatest interest to the Speech of the Secretary of State for War, but it was with a sense of disappointment that he found there were so many excellent technical reasons why no reduction was possible. If there was to be social reform it must cost money, and where was it to come from? Could they burden the people any further? It was only in regard to the Naval and Military expenditure that they could conceive any reduction. In 1895 there was spent on the Army and Navy £43,000,000 sterling. This year he understood the amount was £73,000,000 sterling, or an increase of £30,000,000. The Secretary of State for War, he was glad to say, had not closed the door upon them entirely, because he had told them that the expenditure on the Army depended upon policy, and the right hon. Gentleman had further pointed out that the increased expenditure had largely been caused by the very large increase in the force maintained abroad. He ventured to suggest that the time had come when the 20,000 men need no longer be maintained in South Africa. There was an opening for a substantial and solid reduction in expenditure by reducing the forces in that country. The history of our connection with South Africa showed that expensive militarism had always attended our forward policy there, and the lesson to be learnt was that if this country was prepared to pursue a policy of leaving questions concerning South Africa alone to be dealt with by South Africa itself, then the time had clearly come when it was unnecessary to maintain these large bodies of troops in that country. He particularly suggested that a force such as that maintained at Middelburg in Cape Colony was wholly unnecessary, and if there were any disaffection the force would be wholly inadequate. But there was no disaffection. The Boers had accepted the situation and had given every evidence of their acceptance of it, and he understood that the Government were going to act upon it. He was not in a position to say what had been the cost of the troops in South Africa, and of military works and other expenses connected with the maintenance of the force there, but it could not have been less than three or four millions a year since the War terminated, and there was an additional expense connected with supplying the battalions with fresh troops. There would seem to be a substantial reduction therefore in view, and he would urge the Secretary of State to carry out the reduction at as early a date as possible. Ministerialists had been returned by a large majority in favour of the policy of peace, retrenchment, and reform, and they were bound to give some effect to the mandate. It was time that they determined to effect some change with regard to this gigantic Military expenditure and set their faces like flint against the forward policy in armaments.

CAPTAIN CRAIG (Down, E.) said he rose not to criticise in any hostile spirit the statement of the Secretary of State for War, but to supplement one of the most important points in his long and interesting speech. The point which had occurred to the people in this country was that no matter how efficient the Army, the Auxiliary Forces, the Militia, the Yeomanry, and the Volunteers might be they were always face to face with the problem—What had the country done in the way of preparation in the event of all the forces at the disposal of the Crown being absorbed by war? What preparation had been made in order to cope with the vast number of patriotic Britishers who desired to take up arms to supplement those other forces? If they walked abroad in the country generally they would find that the people took an interest in Army matters. From the point of view of their use in time of war, if ever this country was in such a plight as it was before the South African campaign, it was to be hoped that those walking about prepared to take arms would be met with some organisation such as had been indicated by the Secretary of State for War. The right hon. Gentleman was perfectly right in treating the vast mass of Volunteers as, in the first place, not all available for foreign service, and he had also to take into consideration that a Volunteer of this evening might not be a Volunteer to-morrow morning; but nevertheless a man who could ride and shoot and bear himself properly in every way, who might not belong to any Auxiliary Forces, was still a valuable asset to the war material which might be required in an emergency. It was necessary to take some steps—no matter what policy might be thrown across the floor of this House as to the re-organisation of the Army, the Militia or the Auxiliary Forces—that this country might be assured that the moment there was an outbreak of war the vast material at its disposal would be seized upon and encouraged and taken proper care of. He had noticed some instructions which were issued by the French Minister for War to those in charge of depôts for recruiting, and he thought this applied to the timorous man who came forward in the event of a national emergency. The French Ministry had given out that these men had to be treated courteously and welcomed to the service which they were willing to undertake for the national good. He thought that there was both mismanagement and discourtesy shown when the Volunteers came forward on the last occasion, and that could only be remedied if those at the head of the Army would impress upon all officers and men that, whilst the great bulk of those who served in South Africa and other campaigns still leavened the Army, this was a Volunteer country and that a Volunteer was to be treated in the hour of need the same as a soldier. They ought to give encouragement to men to come forward at critical periods; that should be put into the text books and put before a soldier as soon as he enlisted as well as before the officer at Sandhurst or Woolwich. The spirit of calling upon the country as a whole to support a war should be clearly understood by our generals and colonels from the time they entered the Army, so as to fulfil the ideas which the Secretary of State for War had so ably put before the House to-day. In response to the War Office appeal many men would very likely come forward and give a hand, but if they did so under present conditions there was no method of receiving them in some new unit which would appeal to the men. There were in some districts most efficient Militia and Yeomanry, and on this side of the water there were most efficient Volunteers. The authorities might be able to put their hands on a district where all three forces existed, but when war broke out they would not come forward in sufficient numbers to make a new unit equally efficacious if taken to the seat of war. He agreed with the Secretary of State for War that men should take upon themselves the proper duties of citizenship and learn to shoot, or ride, or shoe a horse, or do any of the things necessary for work in the field. If they threw themselves heart and soul into the idea of citizenship and the training which the Secretary of State indicated, it would not require a very long time to make the scheme work homogeneously, so that these units would be useful either in South Africa or any other country. They were constantly face to face with this problem, and so far nothing whatever had been done to assure the people of the country that they were safe. They had rifles, bandoliers, uniforms, and all the accoutrements that vast wealth could command, but when it came to men they had to turn round and say, "Will you come and save us in a difficult situation?" If the country was aroused to help in such a situation, the least they could do was to ask the War Office authorities to have that machinery in such perfect order that they could go to the recruiting officer, be taken freely by the hand, taught their duty, and sent to the front, and when at the front treated exactly the same as the regular troops were. It should not be forgotten that the regular troops were Volunteers also—it might be a long or short service—and they should be trained to look upon Volunteers as their equals in every respect.

COLONEL HERBERT (Monmouthshire, S.) said he claimed that indulgence which was always extended to an hon. Member who addressed the House for the first time. The statement of the Secretary of State for War had given him much pleasure, and he had been pleased to listen to the graceful, sympathetic and appreciative words he had used with regard to those who collaborated with him at the War Office. Having had some experience himself, he could assure the right hon. Gentleman that he had taken the best course to secure the highest service which an efficient staff were able to render. He was confident that if the Secretary of State for War approached the problems of the men in the same sympathetic spirit as that which he had applied to the higher officers of the staff, he would win from the rank and file the same hearty co-operation which he was sure he had received from the headquarters staff at the War Office. The right hon. Gentleman had come before the House this evening less in the character of a great Army reformer than in the character of a reformer of War Office finance. It might be urged, as it had been by the hon. Member for East Bristol, that the results of his attempts at economy had been to save only a paltry £17,000; but as one who had had some little experience in dealing with the preparation of Estimates, he would say that, personally, so far from being disappointed he hailed that decrease as a considerable triumph under the circumstances which the right hon. Gentleman had had to face. In his experience in dealing with Estimates he had found that there were really only two items of expenditure upon which they could expect at once to make a large and sweeping reduction, and these were the item of men and the item of stores. Under the head of stores and supplies, the right hon. Gentleman had adopted a wise policy in not making a great reduction, but, on the contrary, in making an increase in order to make up for the exhaustion of those supplies which remained over at the end of the war. It was false economy to let the stores get too low. In regard to the question of making a sweeping reduction of the number of men, again he thought the right hon. Gentleman had done well to advance slowly. He had shown that a reduction could be made without making those changes which were the most unsettling things in the Army. He had succeeded in making a reduction notwithstanding the fact that he took over the Estimates already prepared by another Secretary of State, and having had but little experience and only three short months to work in. In looking through the Estimates he had recognised the truth of the fact which the right hon. Gentleman had pointed out, namely, that military expenditure had the peculiarity of an absence of finality, the effect of which was that expenditure incurred in this year might have to be paid for by a still larger expenditure in the course of another three or four years. They had that exemplified very strongly in the unfortunate change which was made a few years ago, when the whole terms of service in the Army were suddenly altered, and a three years term adopted instead. That change was being paid for to-day by no less a sum than £300,000. There was £220,000 as increase for reserve pay; £30,000 as increase in the cost of recruiting, because as the three years men were gone they must get others in their place; there was another increase of £32,000 for bounties given to men to re-engage in order to make up the waste which was not properly calculated before; and, further, there was another £20,000 for various allowances which came in in consequence of the increased cost of raising further men; making a total of £302,000. If the right hon. Gentleman could find a means of putting an end to that form of expenditure he would advance a considerable distance towards the solution of the problem which he had before him. The right hon. Gentleman had very truly said that the question of the reduction of the number of men lay in another department, the key to which really was India. That was a question upon which the House would have to declare itself upon another occasion. But there was a moral to which he would draw attention from this example, which showed that the right hon. Gentleman was advancing along a proper line when he did not express any intention of making great and sudden changes. The Army required, above all things, a period of rest. There was nothing that so contributed to the efficiency of the Army as the knowledge that there was some sort of security that what existed to-day would not be changed to-morrow. The first condition of an Army was that there should be a steady supply of men, and equally that there should be a good supply of capable and efficient officers. When the terms of service were changed, as they had been during recent years, they could not wonder that there was not that anxiety to enter His Majesty's service that there should be and that there had been in the past. They saw in the units to-day men serving side by side under no less than four different systems of enlistment. Each one of those different terms of service was a grievance to the other three. It was impossible that they could all be equally satisfied, and they were therefore establishing in the units, by those things, a condition of things which militated most seriously against the efficiency of the Army. With regard to the provision of officers, the right hon. Gentleman had spoken of the arrangements which he hoped to bring about to raise the educational standard of the Army. He would ask the right hon. Gentleman to consider also whether he could not introduce the highest possible standard of competition among the younger officers of the service. They had, in the Army, a system totally different from that in the Navy, in that the junior ranks of the Army were dealt with entirely by seniority, while the senior ranks only became subject to selection. In the Navy the junior ranks were more subject to selection than they were in the Army. If they could raise the spirit of emulation among their junior officers they would find that the Army had an even larger number of highly educated and efficient officers to draw upon than it had at present.

*MR. LEA (St. Pancras, E.) said he wished to preface his remarks by thanking very heartily the right hon. the Secretary of State for War for his announcement that flogging was to be abolished in the military prisons of this country. He sincerely hoped that that removed the last vestige of corporal punishment in the Army.

And, it being half-past Seven of the clock, the debate stood adjourned till this Evening's Sitting.

EVENING SITTING.

SUPPLY (ARMY ESTIMATES).

Order read, for resuming adjourned debate on Question [8th March], "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."

Question again proposed.

Debate resumed.

*Mr. LEA, continuing his speech, said with regard to the reduction of our military expenditure, that Members of this House must have viewed with alarm the growth of the Army Estimates during the last twelve years. When they realised that in that period the expenditure had almost doubled, it must be with regret that they noted that there had been no improvement as regarded efficiency. He had noticed a very strong desire, in London and in the country, to see a very great reduction in both the Army and Navy Estimates. He did not however, view a reduction in the Naval Vote with either complacency or sympathy. It must be remembered that we had to face an absolutely different military problem from that of any Continental Power. We were a great manufacturing country, dependent on other countries for our food supply; for that reason it was of paramount importance that we should keep our trade routes open, and that necessitated our having an important Navy. In his opinion the financial resources of this country could not stand the strain of the expense of an Army on the Continental pattern and an important Navy as well. Therefore, he had no hesitation in urging the House to press the right hon. Gentleman to give some assurance that in the next few years he would make a substantial reduction in the Army Estimates. In his opinion there never was, and never could be, any fear of an armed invasion of these Islands. In the first place the fighting force employed would have to be of sufficient magnitude to overcome any possible opposition brought against it in the first four or five days after it had landed on our shores. It was computed that such a force would require to be 40,000 or 50,000 men, and the amount of shipping necessary to bring such a force over could not be massed at any foreign port without giving the British Admiralty ample time to mobilise the Fleet, and render any such attempt unsuccessful. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Croydon had said that any continental nation would look upon the sacrifice of 10,000 men as a cheap price to pay for the occupation of one of our naval arsenals, but he thought that had the right hon. Gentleman been more familiar with the defensive works of our arsenals he would not have made the remark. If we were at war with a continental nation it would be unnecessary to bring an invading force to this country or to subject it to any force whatsoever, because when once we lost the control of the trade routes and food supplies ceased to come in we should be face to face with famine; invasion would be rendered unnecessary, and to maintain a great army at home to provide for such a problematical state of things was throwing a burden upon the country which it ought not to be called upon to bear. The Army of this country should be as small as possible in times of peace, but should, through its training and organisation, be capable of very vast expansion in time of war, but not such an expansion as the hysterical and frenzied expansion that took place in the spring of 1900, which resulted in large amounts of public money being wasted. At present the Army was largely over-manned, but the number of men borne on the strength of the Army very much depended on the course pursued by the particular Government in power. We had now some 20,000 men in South Africa. That was a great expense to the taxpayer of this country. The object of these men being there was to overawe the Boers who were disarmed. As soon, however, as the Chinese outrages took place the Boers were allowed to have arms for their protection against the Chinese marauders, and the result was that in the event of an explosion those arms would be used against the men who were there to overawe and keep down the Dutch. There was no doubt that the state of Parties in the present Parliament was due to a deep sense of resentment on the part of the people of this country at the growth of the naval and military expenditure and many who sat on the Liberal side of the House were very greatly disappointed that in the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War there had been no forecast of any reduction in the Estimates. They all realised that whilst this vast expense was going on the great social reforms for which the country was waiting were marking time; that it was impossible to carry them out while money was being spent and wasted in this unproductive fashion. It was not for him to say where reduction should be made, but the people required a reduction and he should have great sympathy with any Liberal Member who had to meet his constituents at the next election knowing that no great reduction had been made. The great reform, the only reform that they must ask for was to make the British officer earn his pay and live on it. The officer of the future must be a different man from the officer of the past. The military officer was not comparable with any other professional man in civil life in the strenuousness with which he learned and conducted his business. As an efficient servant of the taxpayer he was one of the greatest frauds that ever existed. It had been said that the British military officer was badly paid, but he was better paid than officers in any continental army and was less efficient. All the campaigns and expenditure in which we had been engaged during the last twenty years had commenced with a series of ghastly blunders, many of them being the result of inefficiency and the want of study on the officers' part, and those blunders had to be redeemed by the lives of our soldiers. We did not even learn from experience, because the blunders of fifty years ago were perpetuated in more recent times. The charge of the Light Brigade at Balaclava had its counterpart in the charge of the Lancers in the Egyptian Campaign. The deploying of the guns in a very exposed position in Afghanistan was the prototype of the incident in the Battle on the Tugela in the last war, when Lord Roberts' son lost his life in attempting to recapture the guns there The blunder of Spion Kop was a mere reproduction of that at Majuba, with this difference, that at Spion Kop the generals were at the bottom of the hill. No one could come to any other conclusion than that the success of our expeditions had been the result of the pluck and luck of our men. It was only that which brought us through. It certainly was not generalship, and the sacrifice of life and money would have been considerably less if those responsible had been more efficient and more conversant with their duties. He attributed the inefficiency of our officers to the training they received, which in his opinion was of the wrong kind, and he advocated the adoption of a system more nearly analogous to that adopted at West Point, U.S.A. He also suggested that there should be a much larger percentage of men raised from the ranks to a commission, and that promotion should be by way of selection and not by seniority; that an inspecting officer should visit the various regiments and battalions and work with them for a fortnight at a time, giving no notice of his visits, and that they should select for promotion those whom they thought most fit to be promoted.

*MR. J. R. MACDONALD (Leicester) said he desired to draw attention to the condition of labour in the arsenals, and to move, "That, in the opinion of this House, the conditions of labour in the Arsenals should be, as regards hours, wages, and right of combination equal to the best trade union private firm." In doing so he took the opportunity of thanking the right hon. Gentleman for the very generous and sympathetic references he had made in his very remarkable speech to the relations which ought to exist between the War Office as an employer of labour and those it employed. Labour Members generally would like the right hon. Gentleman to repeat in the House also some of the welcome assurances which he had given to deputations outside, and to enable the right hon. Gentleman to deal with one or two points, he would draw attention to one or two matters in connection with the Resolution he proposed to move.

The right hon. Gentleman was well aware of the conditions of labour in the arsenals, but his remarks on that point did not quite cover the whole field, because there was a large body of labour outside these arsenals which required sympathetic attention much more than even the labour inside the arsenals. For the purposes of discussion this evening he did not propose to refer to those matters because they felt perfectly certain that the right hon. Gentleman would approach those matters from the point of view of reform. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would approach the subject of the underpaid workers and the underpaid women workers in precisely the same frame of mind as that in which he approached the subject of the better paid arsenal skilled worker. He dared say it was impossible to dissociate military control from a certain amount of particularism, a certain narrowness of view, and a certain amount of red tape. As an illustration, he mentioned what went on regarding new engagements at Enfield Lock and other places. When a man's application for a situation had been received he was ordered to be vaccinated. The right hon. Gentleman would not suppose that one of the Members for Leicester could allow that to go without a protest. The man was a week off duty, and got no pay. He had to pay for his own vaccination, although it was carried out by the doctor on the spot, and the dispenser, he was informed, sailing very near to what remained of the Truck Act, actually went round the shops and collected half-crowns from the victims whom the right hon. Gentleman had ordered to be vaccinated. He felt sure that the Minister who earlier in the day had made sympathetic statements about the relations between the Government and its workpeople would put an end to that. The right hon. Gentleman might take it that that was only one instance of many similar things belonging to a class of relationship which he hoped would soon be put an end to. In considering the question of Government employment in arsenals he would like to approach it from the point of view from which the right hon. Gentleman approached his task this afternoon. What was the idea of an arsenal? Why did we have arsenals? That was a question it would take a considerable time to explain, but one point that ought to be emphasised was that if the Government was going to have an arsenal at all it ought to be the most efficient machine for doing the work. Regularity and certainty of employment were necessary if that efficiency was to be obtained. They must adapt the whole machinery of the arsenal control so that the State would receive the most efficient service from the staff of men employed there. The essential condition of efficiency in the arsenals was a proper minimum wage. If the right hon. Gentleman made up his mind to treat the men as though he was a model trades union employer he could count on the support of the Labour Members, and count also on their protection against illegitimate pressure being put upon him. In that connection he reminded the right hon. Gentleman there were about 3,000 workers in Woolwich whose wages were under 24s. per week. In view of the expensive living in London he hoped the right hon. Gentleman would listen sympathetically to the request that the minimum should be raised to 30s. per week. He drew attention also to the methods of work under the War Office. He thought the War Office had been a little too fond of piece work in the most aggressive, aggravating, and objectionable form. Piece work was always work done in a rush, and men were actually engaged on piece work in the danger houses. The mere mention of this fact would, he did not doubt, set the Department on an investigation, which would result in the discovery of a serious grievance that ought to be remedied. He called attention also to some serious attempts to reduce the standard of pay for piece work. He cited several instances of what he regarded as attempts to grind down the wages of the men to the lowest point, and expressed the hope that the right hon. Gentleman would also institute an investigation into this matter. He was glad to find the right hon. Gentleman had committed himself to the recognition of trades unionism, but he was not sure how far some of his subordinates thought he had committed them. He had a letter written only the day before by one of the right hon. Gentleman's subordinates of the Royal Army

Clothing Department, declining to receive a trade union deputation in regard to the case of some men who had been discharged. He was glad a Wages Board was to be created, for, if fairly and equitably constituted, it would do an enormous amount of good. It would raise the level of labour and make the workman more comfortable as the Government servant. He suggested, however, that the right hon. Gentleman might adopt the course pursued by the Postmaster-General and inquire into the whole subject of the basis of employment and the organisation of labour. He begged to move.

*MR. BARNES (Glasgow, Blackfriars) seconded the Amendment, and said he wished to associate himself with what had fallen from his hon. friend as to the very remarkable speech they had heard from the War Minister that afternoon. They welcomed the slight improvements which had been effected, and took them as an indication of much more that would follow. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would find ways of dealing with the matter in a larger and more comprehensive way than had yet been done, so that the social and industrial measures which they desired might be passed through this House as early as possible in order to effect some relief from the burdens which the people had to bear. That result could not be effected unless there was economy on the one hand and a new source of revenue obtained on the other hand. Those with whom he was associated welcomed the desire manifested by the right hon. Gentleman to connect the Army with the civic and social life of the people of the country. It might be that these contemplated changes would not have as their first result the lessening of the risk of war; but ultimately they believed it would have that effect, as it would tend to introduce that feeling of responsibility on the part of the people of this country which must be brought to bear upon questions of that kind. He also welcomed the declaration of the right hon. Gentleman that the Department would be prepared to sanction a system of collective bargaining between themselves and the workmen. The workers had to thank the present Prime Minister for doing, while he was War Minister, what he could to improve the condition of the workmen, it being largely due to the right hon. Gentleman that the workmen enjoyed the eight hours day. The right hon. Gentleman said then that the workshops of the Government ought to be as good as those of private employers in regard to pay and conditions of labour. To illustrate the present position he would take the case of one class of men engaged at Woolwich Arsenal, viz., the engineers. The average rate of wages of those employed by the first flight of employers in the whole of the London district was 41s. 5d. The minimum under which no man who was a member of the Society of Amalgamated Engineers could be allowed to take employment was 39s. At Woolwich Arsenal 90 per cent. of the men were only receiving 37s. 6d., and there were a number of men working at 35s. and less. Then the system of piece work was defective, and under it he had know men to work for 30s. a week. The system of fixing prices was also wrong, and he knew of one man who worked for thirty hours and got 8s. So far as he was concerned, and he thought he was voicing the opinion of trade unionists generally, they thought that a man, who had served seven years, at the termination of his employment should be brought to the standard rate of wages in his trade. While the best employers did not do so, there were many employers who paid from 2s. to 4s. less than the standard rate on the termination of apprenticeship, but who in no instance, so far as he knew and so far as the agreement between the trades union and employers were concerned, retained the wage below the standard rate after the age of twenty-three. But in the Woolwich Arsenal it was customary to pay these men about £1 or a guinea a week, and it was only with the utmost difficulty that they could get the standard rate of wages until five or six years after the termination of their apprenticeship. This was an insidious way of reducing wages, and one which might well be looked into. He had made an inquiry as to the practice in the Royal Dockyards, and he found that at Devonport, on the termination of a man's apprenticeship, he was paid only 2s. below the rate, and the full rate was paid him at the termination of a year. The same was the case at Sheerness, and Portsmouth; and, at Chatham, the full rate was paid at the termination of the man's apprenticeship. He asked the right hon. Gentleman to at least bring the War Office conditions up to the standard recognised by the Admiralty. Still more important was the question of the chances of promotion to the men in the Royal Arsenal now as compared with a few years ago. There seemed to have been a disposition on the part of all the departments of State for the last year or two to ear-mark all the posts of trust for men of University training, and to debar workmen from the chance of promotion they used to have. He admitted that some time ago there was room for improvement. As an old Arsenal workman he knew from experience that kissing sometimes went by favour, and therefore they were not at all averse to some examination — competitive if they liked — in order to ascertain if a man were really competent for these important duties. The report of a special Committee which sat in February or March of last year stated that the Committee were of opinion that the classes referred to as managerial should form the Upper Division, and that the qualifications of all should, if possible, include a University education of a standard to be approved. It might be thought that a man could at least aspire to be a foreman. But the Committee's recommendation on that point was that a man must have a University education if he would aspire to that rank. In answer to their protest the men were told that men had educated themselves in the past and could do so in the future to a point fitting them for the highest possible positions. He ventured to say that that was a mere playing with words. A man who had the necessary qualifications and had taken advantage of the opportunities which were now fortunately open to him at the Woolwich Polytechnic and other places should have the chance of rising to positions of trust and responsibility. It would be an incentive to them to give better and more loyal service, and therefore would be not only in the best interests of the men themselves, but of the Army and War Office administration.

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out from the word 'That,' to the end of the Question, in order to add the words 'in the opinion of this House, the conditions of labour in the Arsenals should be, as regards hours, wages, and right of combination, equal to the best trade union private firm'."—(*Mr. Ramsay Macdonald.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

*Mr. HALDANE: I have no exception to take to the tone of the mover and seconder of the Amendment. I have always felt that much of the difficulty which arises over these questions of wages and hours of labour is due to the abstract nature of the questions raised. I think the House will agree that a good many of the points raised by both hon. Members are points which it is impossible to debate across the floor of the House, but which are eminently adapted for discussion by such a joint Committee of the War Office and representatives of the men as we announced some little time ago we were prepared to appoint. We cannot bind ourselves by the discussions of such a Committee, but the result will have very great weight with me in coming to a decision as to what ought to be done. There are some other points which appeared to raise questions of another kind. There is the question of vaccination, which was raised by the hon. Member for Leicester. The origin of the system under which the War Office insist on the vaccination of the people who enter the employment at Enfield is that, some years ago, there was a scare and the men came and asked for it. The War Office provide vaccination at their own expense, and if a man is ill as the result of the vaccination the War Office give him sick-pay during that time. I am strongly in favour of vaccination in these cases as a preventive against an outbreak of smallpox, but, in asking for it, I recognise that the charge should come upon the public and not on the employee. We do not propose to alter the system, but I can assure the hon. Member that, if there is any case, as I gather there is a case, in which a fee of half-a-crown has been asked, it shall be very strictly dealt with. I agree with the hon. Member that we ought to do all we can in our power to make the Arsenal a model of efficiency. I am very sorry that other calls upon my time in connection with the duties of my office have prevented me from spending quite as much time as I should have liked to do with the nationalised industry, but I do my best. As hon. Members know, we have swept away, as far as possible, the whole system of red tape which prevented men from having access to us for the purpose of having their grievances considered. I do not want every workman who has a grievance to come and see me; but my instructions are that a workman shall have free access to the person with whom he is in direct contact, that we shall lay down no abstract rules to prevent a trade union representative accompanying him, and that, in cases of grievances affecting classes of men or questions of principles, there shall be, if necessary, free access to the Secretary of State. We want to get at the truth of the matter. We wish to be model employers, frugal employers, it may be, but, dealing on the footing of the standard rate. we wish to do everything we can to show that we are what we mean to be, model employers. It is my wish that the question of whether there is a satisfactory minimum wage at Woolwich Arsenal, and the question of the men who are receiving 24s. a week shall be brought before the joint Committee for investigation. With regard to the difficult question of fellowship piece work, the system was abolished in the case of lyddite shells, because I am perfectly certain it led to pressure. I shall be quite ready to look into the matter as it affects the handling of gunpowder, but other things that are done under the system, such as filling cartridges with cordite, stand on a different footing. So far as apportionment is concerned, that is a matter which we desire to look into. We have no interest in the matter except to see that everyone gets fairly paid for his labour. The system has been in existence for a long time, and it enables some men to earn a good deal of money which they might not otherwise earn. As to the question of overstaffing with superior officers, that is not a mistake the Government are prone to make, because the Treasury look with the utmost jealousy at every superior appointment that is made. I do not think it is likely that there are too many superior appointments at Woolwich, but I am prepared to examine any representations that are made about slowness in the promotion of the men. For these superior positions we require men with scientific knowledge, though that may not be absolutely indispensable. Hon. Members will realise that they are appealing to the wrong person if they ask me to abolish scientific knowledge for a good deal of the work that has to be done. My life had been spent in preaching the necessity for better education and scientific training. I would like to throw open the Universities in England, as they are thrown open in Scotland, to the working classes. I would rather the working classes took advantage of the increased facilities that are opening up to them and obtain that scientific knowledge than that they should press me to appoint them to these posts without the scientific knowledge that in many cases is indispensable. There may be cases at Woolwich where there may be a better system of promotion. That is a matter I will look into. My whole desire is to get the best men for the important places. There is no distinction now between a man in one kind of coat and a man in another kind of coat; the distinction now is between brains. With regard to the clothing factory, I think there has been a mistake. I am told that the two men to whom reference has been made are kept on. We cannot discuss individual cases in this House; we can only discuss general questions, and I have given an earnest of the way in which I shall endeavour to deal with all matters relating to Woolwich Arsenal, Enfield Arsenal, and the Pimlico clothing factory At Woolwich there are some things which contrast very well with what takes place at private yards. There is the 48 hours week system. If there are any big questions of principle, I and my hon. friend are always accessible, and we hope to have this conference going before very long, at which these and other thorny matters can be threshed out. That is the spirit in which we are handling the whole of the labour question, and I hope we shall find we are all really of the same mind and are all working for the good of the community.

Mr. CROOKS (Woolwich) joined in the general congratulations extended to the Secretary of State for War upon his speech, and agreed absolutely with the right hon. Gentleman that they wanted to deal with general principles. There was a question he wished to ask, and that was whether a man who had a conscientious objection to vaccination and had obtained an exemption certificate from a magistrate would be compelled to be vaccinated before he was taken on.

*Mr. HALDANE: I do not know, but if I had to decide the matter, I should say the man would have to be vaccinated. That would be my decision from the point of view of the good of the community.

Mr. CROOKS said he would accept that. Having put a man out of work they ought to pay him.

*Mr. HALDANE: While he is being vaccinated.

Mr. CROOKS: It is not unreasonable to ask you to pay him for the whole time. The man should be paid while the lymph is germinating.

*Mr. HALDANE: If a man who is in our employment has to be vaccinated, he is paid while the lymph is germinating. There seems to be some confusion about this, but if there is anything wrong I will see that it is put right.

Mr. CROOKS said there were one or two points to which he desired to call the right hon. Gentleman's attention. He wished to know if all the women working in the Pimlico factory were getting sufficient wages to keep them. He had been making inquiries as to who these women were, and he was told that they were mostly the wives of old soldiers who were given work as compensation for the good behaviour of their husbands. Preference was given to them in proportion to the size of the family, and a widow with four children would have preference over a widow with one child. He had ascertained that these women were paid 11s. a week. He told one of the officials that he thought that wage meant starvation, and the answer he received was, "Yes, but it is constant." Of course it was permanent starvation. Too much importance might be attached to the scientific attainments of a young man, and much of his apparent knowledge might be matter of memory. He should, in addition, give evidence of being practically acquainted with the work. The wages paid in some of the departments were quite inadequate, and he attributed the higher percentage of accidents among the lower paid men to the constant domestic worry caused by insufficient payment. It was not to be expected that the Secretary of State for War should have personal knowledge of all the matters referred to, but it was a grievous mistake to rely upon figures giving the average rate of wages, for the average was often arrived at by including a number of highly paid officials whose services were not required. The average wage might be comforting to the fellow at the top, but it was no comfort to the fellow at the bottom. They had been promised sympathetic consideration, but that was not what they wanted. Sympathy was cheap. He used to be told that the cheapest thing they could get was advice, but since he had been a Member of Parliament he had come to the conclusion that advice had been outclassed by sympathy. When the Arsenal workmen heard of this promised sympathy to-morrow morning he expected they would ask the tallyman to let them have a suit of clothes on the strength of it. In times of peace when there were a lot of people looking around to find something to keep them out of mischief, the Government sent them down to the arsenal and gave them titles and they went round the works ordering people about. If those men did the same thing in private works the employers would send to the nearest police station to have them removed. The Treasury ought to keep a separate account as to the cost of these men. These men were called supervisors, and it was said that they were learning something. He did not mind this so much, but he objected to the men's wages being cut down in order that these people should be found soft jobs. It was a wicked thing that such men should be there at all, with their titles and their salaries, because it meant grinding down the wages of the most useful workmen in the arsenal. It was no use saying that the Secretary to the Treasury would not stand it, because the workmen ought to be paid a proper wage. The Government had attracted the best workmen into their service because the men believed that Government employment was the best, but promotion was very slow, and there was a good deal of discontent, which was due to the fact that they were overstaffed with officials. When the question was investigated it would be clearly demonstrated to the right hon. Gentleman that there were many officials they could do without. It was all very well to say that the men could come forward and state their case, but they did not all possess the same amount of moral courage, and they all knew the influence of the overlooker. He hoped that the Secretary of State would accept this Resolution and that the Government would make up its mind to pay trade union wages and observe trade union conditions in all Departments. Of course they had the right to demand in return the best labour the men could give. They did not wish to increase the cost to the country, but the account ought to be separated, and so much put down for the work actually done and so much for the superfluous members of the staff. If this were done then they might be able to get decent wages for the poor women and the workmen, and also be able to deal with some of the pensioners. In the lyddite explosion it had been clearly demonstrated that piecework caused the death of those sixteen men. There was a big field in which improvements might be brought about in the arsenal, and the idlers ought to be told that the Government could do without them. If they got rid of about 90 per cent. of the officials the workmen would be able to do the work better.

COLONEL LOCKWOOD (Essex, Epping) referred to the discharge of men at Waltham Abbey. He should be glad to know if there was any prospect of a re-engagement of those men. Some of them had been for five or six years in the service and they were practically starving. He did not wish to press the right hon. Gentleman unduly in this matter, but he wished to know whether there was any hope for them or any prospect of being employed in the factory to which they had been attracted by the hope of Government work.

*MR. HALDANE said that the answer must depend on what supply of cordite the War Office required. The employment was spread as much as possible, so as to make it regular. But the War Office could not control the demand for cordite.

COLONEL LOCKWOOD said he understood that more work was to be given to the Government factories than to private firms.

*MR. HALDANE said they had to consider workmen in other parts of the country as well as in Government factories. The War Office tried to maintain an even balance, but they were bound in the interests of the State to support these other factories, but they tried to do the best they could for their own employees.

MR. LUPTON (Lincolnshire, Sleaford) thought that in the speech of the Secretary of State for War there were grounds for hope that that economy would be secured which Liberals had preached to the people all over the country. He entirely sympathised with the remarks of the hon. Member for Leicester and with his Amendment. He thought fair wages could be found without increasing the Estimates if they went in for reductions of expenditure in other directions. He should like to point out to the House the sources from which the money might come. The right hon. Gentleman on the Opposition Bench had asked where they could make those reductions without impairing the efficiency of the Army. He would like to point out that the garrisons in South Africa, Malta, China—

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order! The hon. Member must confine his remarks to the Question before the House, namely, the Amendment moved by the hon. Member for Leicester.

Mr. LUPTON said that with reference to the Amendment moved by the hon. Member for Leicester, the Secretary of State for War did not altogether touch the point with regard to the compulsory vaccination of the men in the works, and it was open to question whether he ought to force his views on this subject upon unwilling workmen. As far as the management of the works was concerned there was not the slightest reason why a man who went through a Government establishment should not become a most scientific engineer. Workmen, by studying in the evening, had educated themselves, and had risen to the highest positions, and he trusted that the way would be cleared for allowing the workmen to rise to the higher positions. It should be made essential that those who were placed in charge of the workmen should go through the humbler positions, and get a practical knowledge of their work, and that, combined with scientific knowledge, would give efficiency. Let the staff see that those at the top had gone through the various stages of labour, and then they would get much greater efficiency than they obtained at the present time. He sympathised with the remarks of the hon. Member for Leicester, and if any men were underpaid and were not getting a fair living wage he hoped the Government would set an example by removing any such blot from Government employment.

Mr. LANE-FOX (Yorkshire, W.R., Barkston Ash) said that first of all he should like to allude to the speech of the hon. Member for East St. Pancras. He believed that it was considered bad form for a new Member to be criticised in this House, but his excuse was that he started from the same level, because he was also a new Member. When an hon. Member of this House who had served His Majesty stood up and said that a British officer was not a workman in the sense that he was not doing work, that he was the greatest fraud on earth, and that this was due to the bad training he received at a public school, then he had no hesitation in saying that the hon. Member would come to regret that one of his earliest speeches in this House contained such a statement as that, which was absolutely unfounded. He regretted that the hon. Member was not now in his place, but he felt sure that all those who heard his speech would be ready to repudiate what he had said, and they would be ready to tell him what their opinion of him was. To pass to a more savoury subject, he entirely disagreed with the remarks he made and his covert attack upon the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War. He should like to endorse the opinions expressed in the very remarkable speech which they had heard from the right hon. Gentleman representing the War Office. The appeal which the right hon. Gentleman made not only to the House but to the country would not fail to be responded to by those who took an interest in Army matters. He was afraid when the right hon. Gentleman spoke of decentralisation he might not always receive the encouragement he would like. If this matter drifted into the hands of some county councils, he feared that some would not be as enthusiastic as they ought to be. He was a member of the West Riding County Council. They had strong opinions on certain questions; he wished he could think their enthusiasm on imperial matters was as strong as on some others. At all events, he hoped that if the right hon. Gentleman made an appeal to the country it would be successful, and that the country would rally to him and make the Army a truly national concern. The particular thing he wished to allude to was the disappointment it had been to him and some other Members that further reference was not made to the question of rifle ranges. The right hon. Gentleman had asked what forms of waste there were which could be done without. One was the waste of time and money and ammunition incurred by many members of our Auxiliary Forces, when they came to the range to shoot. It was not their fault or that of their officers, but because they had not had a proper opportunity of being trained and taught to shoot before they went on to the range to shoot their course. They knew this was not the moment to ask the right hon. Gentleman to incur expense, but they hoped when the Liberal ship did come in he would find an opportunity of spending money on this particular branch of the service, because he was sure it would save a great deal of waste that was going on at the present moment. A great deal was being done by means of Morris tubes and other devices, but that was not enough. In his own part of the world he did his best to have a rifle range started not many years ago. They got the land and a good deal of money given, and he believed they could have carried it through if they could have got more money. They wrote to the War Office when the late Government was in power asking for £150, and they were told there were no finances to provide the money. Had that £150 been given a rifle range would have been in existence for the use of Volunteers from a large tract of country, who would thus have been far more competent to go on the range and shoot their course. This was a distinct waste that was going on, and he hoped the right hon. Gentleman would see his way to help our population to become what a great many wished—efficient servants of the State and soldiers. He desired to point out another item of expenditure which, if slightly increased, would give a much larger value. He referred to the sum in the accounts for the provision of horses and riding schools One thing which was much wanted in the Yeomanry was an opportunity of more riding parade before the actual training came on, and he suggested that the grant of £100 should be doubled. The speech of the right hon. Gentleman would give satisfaction throughout the country, because everybody would recognise they had had a promulgation from the Government Bench which would secure continuity of policy. He did not agree that it was a mistake to have a big Army and a big Navy. He assured the House he should go to bed that night with a very much greater sense of security and sleep better for having heard the speech of the Secretary of State for War, because he felt that the country was absolutely safe in his hands. He was sure that everything he had said would be endorsed by the Conservative Party to which he belonged.

*Mr. HALDANE appealed to the House to let the Speaker now leave the Chair. The whole debate would still remain open, and he would be enabled to reply to the speeches which had been made. This he could not otherwise do.

Question put, and agreed to.

Main Question put, and agreed to.

SUPPLY.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. Emmott (Oldham) in the Chair.]

ARMY ESTIMATES, 1906-7

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a number of Land Forces not exceeding 204,100, all ranks, be maintained for the Service of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland at Home and Abroad, excluding His Majesty's Indian Possessions, during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1907."

Mr. HALDANE said he understood the desire was that the debate should continue.

***Lord CASTLEREAGH** (Maidstone) said he thought the service Members in the House should take a very prominent part in the debate, and he was sure the House would not withhold from them that indulgence which was always extended to a minority when they endeavoured to point out anything which they felt was not conducive to the well-being of their profession. For the most part the speech of the War Secretary was a great source of gratification to them, and they now felt that that economy about which they had heard so much would not be practised with regard to the Army, because he considered that no large economy could be effected without seriously impairing the efficiency of the Army. He considered they were certainly indebted to the late Government for the steps they had taken with regard to efficiency. They had had tributes from both sides of the House that the Army was perhaps now in a better condition than before. They were, to some extent, in agreement with the Prime Minister in his antipathy to large armaments; but, until the day arrived when national disputes would be settled by arbitration, it was incumbent upon them to assist the Government in maintaining these armaments which alone could ensure for us that place we ought to occupy among the nations of the world. He noted with satisfaction that the War Secretary had made no allusion to a reduction in the number of units in the Army. The rumour of such reductions had had a most disquieting affect upon Members belonging to the service, for such reductions must have constituted a danger to the country. He felt that in the units, in times of peace, they had systems of organisation which in times of war could carry out an efficient service. It did not matter if in times of peace those units were in skeleton condition, because in time of war it had been proved that the military spirit of the country was not wanting. They welcomed the suggestion of the Secretary of State for War with regard to the continuing of the policy of the late Government, and they would all go home with a feeling of far greater security. Referring to the training of officers the noble Lord advocated an improvement of the courses through which the officer went on first joining. At present, instead of learning, he crammed a subject. He admitted that it would be an excellent thing if officers could go to Oxford and Cambridge, but he thought there was plenty of scope provided at Sandhurst for them to learn their profession. The Militia officer, probably had his own profession to which he had to devote most of his time, consequently the question arose as to how the Militia officer could be trained so as to efficiently handle the men placed under him. There was nothing easier than to train the ordinary Englishman to take his place as an efficient soldier in the ranks; but he thought the War Secretary should turn his attention to the difficulty of educating the officer in the efficient handling of men. The noble Lord next referred to the question of the Volunteers, and expressed the hope that the Volunteer force would be divided up into brigades of uniform size, and trained as brigades, under the supervision of the officer who would command in time of war. The main point in which they could congratulate themselves was that they felt, as officers, that the Secretary of State for War had the interest of the Army at heart, and he assured that right hon. Gentleman that he would have the support of everyone who, like himself, was in the Army.

*MR. VERNEY (Buckinghamshire, N.) said he desired to offer a few words on the connection between the Universities and the Army. That, he thought, was a matter of very great importance. Oxford and Cambridge had opened their curriculum very largely in the course of the last fifty or sixty years. There were those alive who remembered the time when no one could take a degree there except in classics or mathematics. Now a great diversity of subjects were admitted to the advantage of the country and of the Universities themselves. One might go to these Universities and take a degree in law, medicine, theology, science and languages, besides classics and mathematics, but, strangely enough, so far, military science had been left out. He thought the reason for that was that the Army up to this time had not been considered a learned profession, but since the time of the Franco-Prussian war—from the days of Moltke down to the days of Marshal Oyama and Admiral Togo what had happened showed that unless the leaders of combatants by sea or land considered their duties from the point of view of members of a learned profession, they could not look for success. The success of those leaders had been gained by learning applied to the profession of which they had been so distinguished ornaments. The Universities might go a long way in the direction of giving a curriculum which an officer in the Army could avail himself of. The War Office might approach the Universities and the Universities might approach the War Office in regard to this matter. He had great hope that that was going to be done. There were two objections which might be raised. Of course anything like specialisation was very much opposed by many of the leaders in University life, and yet there had been introduced into our Universities in recent years a preparation of a very special kind for certain professional careers. The objection on the military side was one which every soldier felt. Anything like an infringement of the privileges of seniority in the Army was felt to be serious, and it was looked upon with jealousy, he might almost say of a professional kind. It would not be popular in the Army, to say the least of it, to allow a man who had taken his degree at a University to have any seniority whatever in the Army over even the youngest cadet who had just left Sandhurst. His plea was that the Secretary of State for War should do what he could to remove these objections, so that the Universities might open their doors wider and give opportunities to officers who had time and opportunity for working at the scientific branches of their profession. Why was it that there had been in the country recently the anticipation of a great reduction in expenditure? He held in his hand what he thought was one of the most interesting tables of statistics of the armaments of Europe he had ever seen. It was a comparative table showing the increase of expenditure on European armaments including Navies in the ten years beginning with 1894 and ending with 1904. The gross increase of the expenditure on the armaments of France, Germany, Russia (before their war) and Italy, including expenditure on their Navies and Armies, was £27,000,000, while the gross increase in the United Kingdom of expenditure, including that on the Army and Navy during the same ten years, was no less than £50,000,000, or nearly double that of the four great military powers of Europe. He hoped there would be in the near future a great diminution in that enormous expenditure.

MR. GUEST (Cardiff District) said he wished to join in the general chorus of praise with which the speech of the right hon. the Minister for War had been greeted on all sides of the House. If any evidence were wanted of the remarkable power which that speech revealed, it would be in the fact that the right hon. Gentleman had freed this military controversy from the trammels of Party considerations, and, what was more remarkable, had damped down the disappointment which from first to last his Estimates had created in regard to the reduction of military expenditure. The speech was one which revealed a moderation and a courage, not to say self-restraint, which had been absent from most of the speeches he had listened to from Ministers of War. The policy of the right hon. Gentleman fell into two divisions. First, the policy of dealing with small abuses, which he might call the policy of the new broom. The right hon. Gentleman was sweeping all the dirty corners of the War Office and was getting rid of the abuses which had grown up there, and had resulted in some of the ridiculous spectacles revealed in the military fortifications of London. Second, his policy was constructive and far-reaching. It was an elastic policy, because great stress was laid on having a system which could be adapted to peace and war conditions. Moreover, it was a policy which would be popular. He thought that in relying upon popular feeling the right hon. Gentleman had struck the best note of all. He believed that in these democratic times if we were to fight a war, it must be a popular war, not only from the considerations the right hon. Gentleman raised, but, above all, from financial considerations. The creation of a potential citizen force, and the intention shown by the right hon. Gentleman to rely on the local authorities, urban and rural, to give him assistance, was in conformity with the general movement of military events in this country as well as in Europe. That consideration was one which should fortify the right hon. Gentleman in the direction in which he was going, for every one of the countries of Europe was moving in the direction of a shorter conscriptive period. In France the term had been reduced from three years to two, and in Prussia a shorter period was under consideration. There was a general tendency to rely more and more on a Militia than on a professional Army. That was the reason why he thought there was a great mistake last session when the proposal was made to make the Militia liable for foreign service. He anticipated that if a war was a popular one, the Militia would volunteer for such service. Some people were able to contemplate with equanimity those continental incursions which the War Office had not been able to get out of its mind; but he could not hide from himself that the popular spirit on which they relied might urge them in the direction of military operations and that the public temper might be bellicose; and from that point of view it was one of the best features of the right hon. Gentleman's policy that his popular force was not an existing, but a potential force, and would take time to realise.

*Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER: And in the meantime somebody may declare war upon us.

Mr. GUEST said that anything like time and reflection between the adoption of an idea and its being carried into practical effect was repugnant to the right hon. Member for Croydon. That right hon. Gentleman's argument was covered by the consideration that we were separated from the Continent by a strip of water which made it impossible that hostilities could come upon us suddenly or with anything like rapidity. It was curious that the right hon. Gentleman, who was an extreme advocate of the Blue-Water School, should bring forward the idea now that we were liable to a sudden invasion. He was glad to see that two very considerable steps in advance had been made in the general doctrine which should guide our policy in regard to the military position. The first of these was that we had entirely given up any idea of taking any part in continental wars. That idea, which originated in Mr. Brodrick's first speech on military reorganisation, was that we might, at any time, be called upon by treaty obligations to take a part in European wars, somewhat similar to the part we played in the Napoleonic wars. That idea was now wholly abandoned by the War Office, and he hoped that it would never be suggested in this House, as it was sometimes suggested outside, that the friendly relations between ourselves and France rendered us liable, if hostilities broke out between that Power and any other, to take any part in the operations which might ensue. There was one point in the right hon. Gentleman's speech which the hon. and gallant Member for Abercromby Division alluded to with some cautious words, and that was with refersence to the Cardwell system of linked battalions. He agreed that some hon. Members thought that the right hon. Gentleman had gone too far in supporting the Cardwell scheme in all its naked rigour. There were two views of the linked-battalion system. One was that it was essential for th maintenance of our Indian and Colonial forces, and the other was that it was quite unnecessary. He himself would not go to either extreme. The origin of the Cardwell system was that we must have a depôt at home to supply drafts to India and to the Colonies, and that at that depôt there might be a unit to supply a second battalion in case of war. That did not exclude the possibility of the depôt supplying drafts for two units; but he did not believe that that quality was necessary, and he contended that it had broken down in theory and in practice. In his humble opinion the reason why one battalion at home had never in practice been able to supply the drafts for more than one regiment in India or the Colonies, was because of the waste that occurred at home. If it were possible to eliminate that waste it might be a different matter. The Secretary of State for War was very much impressed with the limitation of the funds at his disposal; but he would suggest to the right hon. Gentleman that there was another limitation even more absolute than that of money—viz., that of men. Mr. Brodrick was bitterly assailed for having made a paper Army, and it was principally a paper Army because the men recruited were of little value. They never came to maturity and never became a military asset. It was a waste of money to recruit badly, and that was why Mr. Brodrick's scheme was condemned. If the Secretary of State for War made up his mind to a smaller Army he would get a cheaper Army because he would not have the same waste. Let the right hon. Gentleman take his courage in both hands; let him face the expert advisers with whom he was on excellent terms, and he would be very much surprised if by his plausibility and tact the right hon. Gentleman was not able to affect great reforms in the Army. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would not think that he had any bias or prejudice because he had been associated in moving for the reduction of the infantry. He was glad that there was now at the War Office a right hon. Gentleman who was prepared to consider all these matters without prejudice or fear.

*Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER said that the hon. Gentleman had repeated, not for the first time, one of many misrepresentations which had been made in regard to himself. Now that he was in a position of more freedom and less responsibility he had the opportunity of contradicting one by one these misrepresentations as they arose and he intended to do so, and perhaps hon. Members would not in the future misrepresent him again. The hon. Gentleman had stated that he had expressed a view in regard to the possible invasion of this country which he had never expressed, and had reiterated a statement which he did not make. What he said was this—

> "I have seen this matter stated in various ways. I have seen it stated that, provided our Navy is efficient, the greatest anticipation we can form in the way of the landing of a hostile Army would be a force of 5,000. I should be deceiving the House if I said that represented the extreme naval view. The extreme naval view is that the crew of a dinghy could not land in this country in the face of the Navy."

He hoped the hon. Member would do him the justice, when quoting his words, to repeat what he had actually said and not what the hon. Gentleman thought he said.

Mr. GUEST said that his view on reading that passage was that the right hon. Gentleman was in substantial agreement with the dinghy idea. He did not want to pin the right hon. Gentleman to the number of men in the dinghy, but the point was whether the theory of the Blue Water School would hold water or not.

***Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER** said that that would not do at all. The hon. Gentleman had quoted a mis-statement of what he had said, and was he now to understand that the hon. Gentleman withdrew that mis-statement that it had always been his policy that there was a danger to this country from raids—a danger which should be guarded against? He thought that was a very unhandsome apology on the part of the hon. Gentleman.

Mr. GUEST said he did not withdraw the general contention that the right hon. Gentleman had said in his speech that not even a small force could be landed in this country.

Sir HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central) moved to report progress and ask leave for the Committee to meet again.

Motion made and Question, "That the Chairman do report Progress; and ask leave to sit again." — (*Sir Howard Vincent*)—put, and agreed to.

Committee report Progress; to sit again upon Monday next.

PARLIAMENTARY VOTERS (REGISTRATION) BILL.

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Debate arising.

Mr. CREMER (Shoreditch, Haggerston) formally moved the Second Reading of this Bill.

Sir WILLIAM BULL (Hammersmith) said that they ought not at that hour of the night to proceed with a private Bill on a most important subject, containing sixty clauses.

And, it being Midnight, the debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed to-morrow.

Mr. GEORGE WHITELEY (Yorkshire, W.R., Pudsey) moved the adjournment of the House, and said that on Monday the Prime Minister would move the suspension of the twelve o'clock rule.

Adjourned at one minute after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Friday, 9th March, 1906.

Several Lords took the Oath.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

The Lord Chancellor acquainted the House that the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the Certificates from the Examiners that the Standing Orders applicable to the following Bills have not been complied with :—Folkestone, Sandgate, and Hythe Tramways (No. 1); Folkestone, Sandgate, and Hythe Tramways (No. 2).

Also the Certificates that the further Standing Orders applicable to the following Bills have been complied with :—County of Durham Electric Power Supply [H.L.]; Newcastle-upon-Tyne Electric Supply [H.L.]; Knott End Railway (Extension of Time) [H.L.]; Railway Clearing System (Superannuation Fund) [H.L.].

And also the Certificate that the further Standing Orders applicable to the following Bill have not been complied with :—Mullingar, Kells, and Drogheda Railway [H.L.].

The same were ordered to lie on the Table.

West Yorkshire Tramways Bill [H.L.]. Presented, and read 1^a.

Dover Harbour Board Bill [H.L.] Reported, with Amendments.

Norwich Union Life Insurance Society Bill [H.L.] Read 2^a, and committed.

PETITIONS.

SUNDAY CLOSING OF SHOPS.

Petitions in favour of; of Trade Associations (44); the Lord's Day Rest Association; Early Closing Association; and persons signing (13); read, and ordered to lie on the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

COLONIES: ANNUAL.

No. 481. Ceylon (Report for 1904). Presented (by command), and ordered to lie on the Table.

INTERMEDIATE EDUCATION (IRELAND).

Rule made by the Intermediate Education Board for Ireland making an alteration in the Honours Course, Irish Middle Grade Programme, 1906.

SUPERANNUATION.

Treasury Minute, dated 1st March, 1906, declaring that Richard Hickson, labourer, Royal Small Arms Factory, Enfield, War Office, was appointed without a civil service certificate through inadvertence on the part of the head of his department.

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table.

SUNDAY OPENING OF SHOPS.

*Lord AVEBURY, in rising to move to resolve, "That in the opinion of this House the subject of the Sunday opening of shops demands the serious and early attention of His Majesty's Government," said : My Lords, May I say at once that I do not wish to impute any blame to, or make any complaint of, His Majesty's Government? They have had many matters to consider and the claims on their time and thoughts have been numerous and pressing. My object is rather to convince them that in dealing with this subject they would have the enthusiastic and overwhelming support of the shopkeeping community as well as the general approval of religious bodies, of the local authorities, of the working classes, of the Committees appointed by your Lordships, and, if we should be so fortunate as to carry this Resolution, of your Lordship's House.

My Lords, this subject is pressing, for the evil is spreading; and it is important, for it affects vitally the health welfare, and character of the community. That Sunday trading is on the increase no one will deny. The Lord Mayor of Manchester recently called a meeting to consider it. The Town Council of Liverpool have passed a resolution deploring it. Witnesses from various parts of the country confirmed it. In Glasgow the numbers are over 3,000; in Liverpool, 5,000; in Manchester and Salford, 6,000, and they are increasing. It must be remembered that Sunday shopping is strictly forbidden by the law of the land. It is illegal now. Unfortunately, however, the punishment is limited to a fine of 5s. This would be enough to shut up the very smallest shops, but it is a trifle to the larger ones. They pay the fine, snap their fingers at the law, and open again the next Sunday. The law, therefore, is in this respect unjust.

All that is asked is, not to make Sunday opening illegal, for that is the case already, but to render the law just and effective by increasing the fine.

Perhaps, however, it will be said that the gradual increase of Sunday opening of shops proves either that the shopkeepers wish to open, or that it is necessary for the convenience of the public. I shall hope to convince your Lordships that neither of these suggestions is tenable. It would, indeed, be sad if shopkeepers were anxious to open their shops on Sundays. But this is not so. I am acting at their earnest request and with their support.

Your Lordships will remember that last year a Bill was introduced on the subject, that the House passed the Second Reading after some discussion, and referred the Bill to a Select Committee. The Committee sat for some weeks and reported unanimously in favour of the measure, which, however, was subsequently lost on a snap division taken without notice to the House or to the supporters of the Bill.

The Committee reported that an overwhelming majority of shopkeepers were in favour of the Bill; in fact, they ascertained the views of over 300 shopkeepers' associations representing all the principal trades and all parts of the country, and found that with only three exceptions they were all in favour of the Bill. Since then others have passed resolutions of approval, and in fact the Bill is the Shopkeepers' own Bill, and their opinion is surely entitled to respectful consideration.

Lord Avebury.

Perhaps, then, I shall be asked why, if shopkeepers are anxious to close, do they not close now? If it is their general wish that shops should be shut on Sunday, why is there any need for a Bill? This question was put to several of the witnesses before the Committees, both on the Early Closing Bill and on the Sunday Closing Bill, and the answer invariably was—

> "We should much wish to close if all did so, but if a few insist on remaniing open, others in the same kind of business feel they must do so, too."

What is happening in various parts of the country is that some man, generally a foreigner, goes to a place and opens a shop on Sunday. Then those in the immediate neighbourhood, and in the same way of business, finding their customers going to their rival, follow his example, and gradually more and more open. I am appealing, then, to your Lordships at the request, and with the overwhelming support, of the shopkeeping community. Moreover, I submit to your Lordships that the shop assistants are entitled to the protection of Parliament, and that they may fairly ask that the present law forbidding Sunday shopping should be made efficient.

The shopkeeping community are, of course, not the only class to be consulted. Your Lordships will naturally ask yourselves whether the customers, and especially the poor customers, would be put to any serious inconvenience. The Bill contains special provisions which it is believed would prevent this. The majority of the witnesses who appeared before the Committee concurred in this view. Moreover, every effort has been made to ascertain the views of the working classes. Resolutions in favour of Sunday closing have been passed by the Trades' Councils of Glasgow and Edinburgh, Bristol, Hull, Nottingham, Walsall, Ashton-under-Lyne, Bradford, Camberwell, Worcester, Pontypridd, Todmorden, Oldham, Leicester, Southport, and Stockport, by the Scottish Trades Council, the Irish Trades Council, and by the London Trades Council (for one day in the week) and there is no Trades Council against; and by the Trades

Unions of the bakers, bookbinders, boiler makers, bricklayers, cotton spinners, cabinet makers, carpenters, dyers, engineers, enginemen, gasworkers and general labourers, joiners, painters and decorators, plasterers, plumbers, tin plate workers, wheelwrights, etc.; in all, 195 trades councils and trades unions.

This seems conclusive evidence that Sunday closing would not injure, and is in fact strongly supported by the working classes. It was, indeed, stated to the Committee that six trades unions opposed the Measure. I have endeavoured to communicate with them. The three principal ones have assured me that, on the contrary, they are heartily with us, and that the opposition came from small lodges, not from the unions themselves. The other three are such small bodies that I have been unable to find them, if indeed they still exist. On the whole, then, the working classes, like the shopkeepers, may be said to be, by an overwhelming majority, at any rate 100 to 1, in favour of the proposal.

I now come to the local authorities. Over fifty corporations or town councils in all parts of the country, including the great cities of Edinburgh, Glasgow, Belfast, and Liverpool, and the executive council of the Urban District Councils Association, representing 490 councils, have passed resolutions in our support; while no single local authority has opposed us. I might also mention many chambers of commerce, friendly societies and other bodies which support us, while I know of none which oppose. Your Lordships' Committee reported that in their judgment our proposals appealed to the conscience of the nation. Within the last few days, Mr. Judson, the able and energetic secretary of the Hairdresser's Association, has sent me resolutions in our support, which I have here, from over 600 religious congregations and other cognate bodies.

Of course, my Lords, I do not deny that there is some opposition. It is remarkable that the great majority of tradesmen who are open on Sundays have taken no action. But in two London districts there are great Sunday fairs, and no doubt a large and profitable business is done. But, as the Committee point out in their Report—

> "Shopkeepers in other parts of London and in the country complain on this very ground, and, as it seems to the Committee, with much reason. They urge that this trading is illegal, that it is hard upon them to be placed at a disadvantage because they conform to the law, and to see a large and profitable business taken away from them by those who set the law at defiance."

Moreover, they are demoralising the whole neighbourhood. Mr. Poynder, the Rector of Whitechapel, told your Committee that—

> "The great need that impresses all of us busy workers in my part of London is the fact that because of the noise and rush we do want to safeguard the lives of our people by their having one day in seven. It is necessary for brain and for body, quite apart from the religious aspect of the question, for the moment, and by the stress at which we are all living down there, Sunday has become practically like any other day. The police estimate that between 30,000 and 50,000 on a Sunday morning do their shopping in our streets, and crowd our neighbourhood right up till noon, practically converting the whole of the morning into an enormous fair. We have hat shops, boot shops, clothing, and all other kinds of shops open. The British population say that they would lose their custom in a great measure if they in self-defence did not open on Sunday. The feeling is very dominant that the result of all this is that many people have to work, whether they like it or not, seven days a week."

Again, Mr. Eyre, Vice-head of the Oxford House in Bethnal Green, gave strong evidence as to the demoralisation of the neighbourhood by the Great Sunday fair. He said that—

> "The conditions which exist in our neighbourhood have a most demoralising effect upon the population, because it is not merely Sunday trading, but it has developed into a regular Sunday fair. Whole masses of people are congregated together, and that attracts all sorts and conditions of buyers and sellers, both the undesirable traders and sellers and the desirable ones; wherever this concourse is gathered together, there you get the professional gamblers, and other people."

He also stated that the shopkeepers in this district were by a large majority —525 to 119—themselves anxious to put an end to the existing state of things. Mr. Forster, Rector of St. Mark's, Walworth, also gave similar evidence. My noble friend Lord Wemyss last year made a good deal of a petition which he presented, signed by 2,000 persons.

We presented, however, many petitions in favour of our proposals—one signed by 83,000 persons. Moreover, his 2,000 are breaking the law, and our 83,000 are conforming to it. His clients are making profits by breaking the law, at the expense of our clients who are conforming to it. I confess, under the circumstances, I am surprised that the signatures were so few.

The President of the Jewish Board of Guardians, which is the representative body of the Jews of the United Kingdom, appeared before the Committee and pressed two Amendments, subject to which, he informed the Committee, the Jewish community would not oppose the Bill. We inserted Amendments on these points. No doubt, as the Jews close for a great part of Saturday, they are in special position; at the same time they open at sunset, and the greater part of Saturday's business is done in the evening. My Lords, the shopkeeping community have submitted to you the Bill which they earnestly desire to see passed, but I am not now asking you to adopt it. We only ask you to urge upon His Majesty's Government the importance of dealing with the subject. Though, no doubt, many of your Lordships work as hard as any other class of the community, still there is a certain change and variety in your duties, and the absence of monotony is almost a rest. Moreover, your time is, as a rule, spent in a good atmosphere. It is difficult for us to realise what it must be, especially for women, to work long hours in close and impure air, on their feet, and often by gaslight, not only on every week-day, but on Sundays also.

If we are to preserve our people in health we must preserve their Sunday's rest. Rest for the mind is as necessary as that for the body. There are, moreover, other and even higher considerations in favour of my Motion, which I will not presume to urge in the presence of the most rev. Primate. My Lords, we have behind us an overwhelming majority of the shopkeeping community, of the working men, of local authorities, of ministers of religion, and of the medical profession, and I will conclude with the last paragraph in the unanimous Report of your Lordships' Committee—

"The Committee," they said, "are convinced by the evidence that Sunday trading is on the

increase, that the Bill is urgently needed, that it is desired by the shopkeeping interests, and would inflict no serious hardship on the poorer classes; that it would be a great benefit to the country generally, and that it commends itself both to the reason and the conscience of the community."

I beg to move the Motion standing in my name.

Moved to resolve, "That, in the opinion of this House, the subject of the Sunday opening of shops demands the serious and early attention of His Majesty's Government." —(*Lord Avebury.*)

*THE LORD ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY: My Lords, I ask leave to say a few words upon this subject, in which I have, of necessity, been interested for a great many years. Your Lordships are too well informed to interpret the absence of a large majority of the Bishops on this occasion as meaning that this is a subject in which right rev. Prelates are not keenly interested. Your Lordships know that at this time of the year, during the Lenten weeks, the difficulty is great for Bishops whose work lies in parts of the country distant from London to attend in this House, but I venture to state, without hesitation, that if the Bishops had supposed that this was a matter likely to be lightly treated or pushed aside you would have had these benches filled by men anxious to press the matter on the attention of your Lordships' House and the country.

But I do not suppose for a moment that we need have any fear that this matter will be lightly set aside. Both sides of the House have been committed for a long time by their Leaders to the assertion that the matter is one requiring most careful consideration and possibly action. The noble Marquess the Leader of the Opposition, when leading your Lordships' House, was even distressed last year that we had gone forward with the Second Reading of a Bill without a higher measure of inquiry than was at that moment asked for. The inquiry took place over a limited range, and dealt simply with the Bill which my noble friend Lord Avebury had introduced, and when the Report of that Committee was presented to the House the criticism was brought forward on both sides that it would have been better if a larger inquiry had taken place. The noble Earl, whose absence we all deplore, who was then Leader of the Opposition, pressed the need for this inquiry in the most trenchant terms; and Lord Wemyss, who opposed, as always, action of the kind suggested, was himself a great advocate of further inquiry, and even suggested that the Cabinet should spend a Sunday morning in Whitechapel or Bethnal Green. That opportunity of further inquiry will be offered if this Motion is passed.

I am particularly glad that this question should have been brought forward, not from the Episcopal Benches, but, as formerly, by a layman, and by one who is not only specially identified with all that concerns the welfare of the working classes, but who at the same time has great knowledge as to commercial interests. It is not in his hands that we should be likely to find any Bill which would be apt to prejudice either the interests of the working classes generally or of the trade and commercial interests which may be concerned. My noble friend Lord Avebury has already referred to the Report of the Select Committee of this House over which he presided last year. I am anxious to emphasise what he has already mentioned—that the Committee dwelt upon the fact that not merely is the evil referred to great, but that it is a growing evil. That is what really constitutes the absolute necessity, as it seems to me, for inquiry and probably for action.

If it were merely that the residents in different places had to complain of the continuance of Sunday trading to which they had, perhaps, long objected, but which was not increasing in any marked degree—if that were all, it might be said, as it was some time ago, "Let sleeping dogs lie." But, my Lords, as we have said before on these occasions, the dogs are not asleep. The thing is going forward with great activity, and anyone who will look into the statistics presented to the Select Committee will see that the evil is one which is progressing so steadily and so markedly that if we do not intervene now we may find it impossible to do so a little later. I press that particular point as an aspect of the question which the Committee emphasised. The Committee were convinced by the evidence that Sunday trading is on the increase. That is the real ground why we should not disregard the warning given to us, and why, if action is to be taken for the restraint of what I veritably believe to be a most harmful thing, the action should be taken speedily.

Information is constantly coming in of the gravity of this matter, both in the crowded regions of our great cities and in our quieter country towns, where the contrast is exceedingly marked between the trading and shopkeeping customs of a few years ago and the customs which are now coming into vogue. But while I say that further action is becoming eminently desirable, I do not for a moment withdraw what I have ventured on previous occasions to say here as to the extraordinary difficulties which surround the whole question. It is exactly one of those matters in which we are face to face with the peril that arises from the attempt to legislate too much or too rapidly. The noble and learned Earl, the late occupant of the Woolsack, has reminded us on more than one occasion when this matter was under consideration, in words which we are not likely to forget of the danger of legislating too rapidly. He has warned us against stretching the string too tight, for if you stretch it too tight it might snap. I for one endorse that view, I have always desired that no action should be taken in this matter without the fullest possible deliberation and consideration, not merely as to the interests of the shopkeeping class who are naturally anxious to secure their Sunday holiday, but also as to the interests of the great consuming class the facts about whom it is so exceedingly hard to ascertain with accuracy.

Every Committee which has sat on this question has experienced the difficulty of arriving at a decision whether hardship would be done by restrictive legislation, not to the shopkeeper, the costermonger and the trader, but to the public at large, the customers who take advantage of Sunday trading. But I think the difficulty has been, to a considerable extent, surmounted by the endeavour to obtain the opinion of

Trades Unions, not in their capacity as representing particular trades but as representing the purchasers who may be expected to suffer, if anybody would suffer, by restrictions upon Sunday trading as it at present exists. Great, certainly, are the difficulties which have to be overcome before legislation upon this complicated matter can effectively be carried forward. The very strength of the pressure that has been brought to bear by the associations representing the hairdressers and barbers at once suggests on both sides the extreme difficulty of the situation—the hardship for those who are called upon to do a great deal of Sunday work, and, on the other side, the hardship that might be inflicted upon a good many of their customers if they were unable to obtain on Sundays the weekly shave to which they were accustomed.

The question, complicated enough before, is undoubtedly increased in complexity by the incursion into our large towns of a foreign population who in some places constitute a large part of the community. In London particularly, where the difficulty is at its height, it is undoubtedly true that there are districts in which a large number of the sellers and buyers belong to another nationality than our own, and many of them to another form of faith. On a previous occasion the noble and learned Earl opposite, Lord Halsbury, referred to the fact that we must take care that we do not inflict hardship on the members of the Jewish faith, who observe Saturday as a day of rest, by forcing them to observe the Sunday in the same manner. I understand and sympathise with the desire that no hardship should be imposed upon the Jewish community; but I think, if we press that argument too far, it would practically come to mean the removal of restrictions upon our Sunday work or Sunday amusements in a great many other fields besides. I venture to think that those who are immigrants of the more modern sort, and who are obtaining the benefits which this country is affording them, will not be subjected to undue hardship if they are obliged, in the public interest, to conform, speaking generally, to the rules which we find it necessary to lay down in a Christian community for the observance of Sunday.

Another complication which has arisen in the matter is the enormous growth of the barrow or costermonger trade, as constrasted with the trade of those who are the permanent shopkeepers. That is one of the difficulties which has to be faced, and it may very possibly turn out that the evil of which we are speaking is partly the result and partly the cause of the increase of that trade; in any case that is a matter which, if legislation goes forward, will have to be carefully worked out and examined into. I do not think that anyone will now say that our desire for action, or at least, for further deliberation on this subject, proceeds from a mere Puritan desire to maintain the strictly Sabbatarian view, or for a rigid prohibition of legitimate forms of occupation on the Sunday. The best answer to such a view, if it were taken, is the fact that in the efforts which are now being made, partly under my own auspices, for promoting a better observance of the Sunday, we are strongly supported by the Roman Catholic hierarchy and their followers. That, in itself, if it stood alone, would be an answer to the suggestion that we are actuated by any Puritan prejudice in the desire to assure the better observance of Sunday in trade matters.

Nor can it be said to proceed from mere insular prejudice, for both in America and France the subject is receiving an attention which is well worth the consideration of those who are trying to deal with it here. I would refer your Lordships to a pamphlet, which I believe is still procurable, containing an address by the Anglican Bishop of New York, Bishop Potter, who is a recognised authority upon social matters in the United States, on the growth, and the difficulties arising from the growth, of Sunday trade in the United States of America at this moment. He has pointed out the need of a check being there imposed, and the moral is very easy to draw as to the duty resting upon us in England, where the evil has not yet reached the height which renders it so difficult to grapple with in the United States. Your Lordships may have noticed the great strike that lately took place among the assistants employed in large establishments in Paris and other towns in France with regard to the increase of Sunday work there, and the way in which eyes are set towards the example of England in this matter. All these things throw a great responsibility on the Executive Government of this country for dealing with, or, at all events, examining closely into, a matter which so intimately concerns the welfare of the people at large.

The Home Office has opportunities of acquiring and correlating knowledge on this subject which no one else possesses. We have had help given to us from that quarter in the different inquiries we have held, but a good deal more might still be done. All that the noble Lord who has brought this matter before your Lordships to-night is asking for is that the matter may now receive the prompt and active attention of His Majesty's Government, and I, for one, look forward with some hope to the results of such attention being given to it in authoritative and administrative quarters. There are not a few of the members of His Majesty's Government who have spoken hopefully on the subject. The right hon. Gentleman who now presides over the Local Government Board, and who is in a peculiar sense in touch with the feeling of the working classes, has made this the subject many times of effective speeches as to the need of something being done to check the evil. Therefore I believe we have a right to look hopefully to the result of such attention as I trust we shall hear to-night that His Majesty's Government are prepared to give to this exceedingly difficult and complicated question.

I need hardly repeat what I have said on former occasions, that my own interest in this matter is, of course, a double one, as, indeed, is that of all your Lordships who regard it, not merely from its secular, but from its sacred and religious side. We have opportunities elsewhere than here for urging that particular consideration on the attention of the English people. Such opportunities we have taken again and again, and we hope this year to do so on a larger scale and in a more organised way than perhaps has been customary hitherto. But we are speaking of it to-night in its social and secular rather than in its religious aspect, and the more it is looked at from that standpoint, the more the various inquiries which have taken place are put alongside one another with a view of distinguishing whether or not the evil is a growing one, the more evident will it appear that this is a matter most eminently calling for the attention, and for the immediate attention, of the Executive if we are to preserve for the English people a privilege which, even apart from its religious sanction, has been an inestimable blessing to the growth and the character and the strength of English life.

The grind of trade competition, in the humble as well as in the higher ranks, was never greater than it is to-day, and I believe that in no way can we better remedy the resultant mischiefs and evils than by securing as far as we possibly can, with all legitimate exceptions and consideration for particular cases, that one day in seven shall be, as it has been in England heretofore, preserved to the people for their benefit in mind, body, and estate. I commend the Motion to your Lordships' consideration.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Lord TWEEDMOUTH): My Lords, the subject which Lord Avebury has brought forward is an extremely interesting and important one, and one which I think may be said to touch the very roots of our national life. It does not matter which point of view you look at this question, whether from the religious point of view, the hygienic point of view, or from the mere opportunist point of view, I think there will be universal agreement that an endeavour should be made to secure, as far as possible, what I may call a six days week for work and one day for rest. That I believe to be absolutely desirable from every point of view. It is not always easy to attain one's object merely by an Act of Parliament, and the history of the Bill that my noble friend has introduced in this House, I think on two occasions, rather goes to show the difficulty of dealing with such a subject by an

Act of Parliament. I do not mean to say that a good deal cannot be done by an Act of Parliament, but I do not think an Act of Parliament dealing with this subject, unless it is very well thought out, and unless it provides for a great many possible contingencies in a thoroughly satisfactory and just manner, will be of much more service than the Act which is now in force.

Above all, I think that the particular *clientele* of Lord Avebury deserve particular consideration—I mean the shop-assistants. You may draw a great line between the man who carries on the trade by himself or with members of his family, and the one who employs assistants under him. I think that the employees deserve more care from the Legislature than the men who work for themselves. I was very glad to hear the most rev. Primate himself put before your Lordships a good many of the difficulties of this particular subject. There is no doubt that the case of the Jews will have to be carefully considered and provided for in a generous manner. There is no sect, no religion, no community which is so careful about observing one day's rest in the week, and the fact that the particular day observed is not the day that we observe necessitates careful consideration and does require to be met in a thoughtful and generous manner.

I do not think I need detain your Lordships further, as I am not going to raise any opposition to the Resolution which has been proposed by my noble friend Lord Avebury. The Government think that this is a subject which deserves their earnest consideration. But they think that something more is required than consideration of a particular Bill. They think that the whole question of Sunday trading should be dealt with in an authoritative manner, and therefore the proposal I have to make is that we should accept this Resolution on the understanding that the whole question of Sunday trading should be referred to a Joint Committee of the two Houses. We believe that that would be an authoritative body to inquire into this important question, and we recommend that course to your Lordships.

*THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE: My Lords, I rise merely for the purpose of expressing the satisfaction with which we on this side of the House have listened to the statement that has just been made on behalf of His Majesty's Government. I do not think I misinterpret the feeling of noble Lords who sit behind me when I say that there is not one of them who would have desired to oppose the Motion made by my noble friend Lord Avebury. We, at any rate, on this Bench, are committed to the view that the existing state of the law with regard to Sunday trading is anomalous and requires amendment. That has been brought out again and again in the discussions which have taken place in this House. The law is anomalous, and the penalties under which that law has been enforced are of such a character that the law, unsatisfactory as it is, is set at naught by those who should be restrained by it.

I believe we are also satisfied that, as the noble Mover told us, this evil is one which is tending to increase. On the other hand, there can be no doubt that the question is one of the most difficult with which Parliament could possibly deal. You have on the one side the universal desire that Sunday should be a day of rest for as large a proportion of the community as possible, the desire that they should on that day obtain some relief from what the most reverend Primate well called the daily grind of their lives; and on the other, you have the undoubted fact that there is a large section of the community who are unable to obtain the common necessaries of life unless they are allowed to trade during certain hours on Sundays. We have also to take into account the interests of the small tradespeople who have been in the habit of supplying the wants to which I have just referred. It is extremely difficult to hold the balance fairly between these different and conflicting interests, and it seems to me that the proposal of His Majesty's Government that this difficult question should be referred to a Joint Committee of both Houses of Parliament is a most reasonable and wise one.

We made an ineffective attempt to deal with this matter last year. It will be remembered that Lord Avebury introduced a Bill which, in principle, met with the approval of the then Government. We at that time made the proposal that there should be a Committee appointed to deal not with the Bill of my noble friend, but with the whole question of Sunday trading. The general feeling in the House was against our proposal. The Bill was accordingly read a second time and referred to a Select Committee, and I am bound to say that when it came back to us we found that the existing confusion was worse confounded. I make no reflection whatever on the Committee. Their hands were tied by the fact that the reference to them did not permit them to make a general inquiry into the whole subject.

I will not, however, refer to the imperfections of the Bill as it came to us last year. It stereotyped many unfortunate exceptions and placed the Secretary of State for the Home Department in a false and embarrassing position; and, last but not least, it was severely criticised both by those who are in favour of the strict observance of Sunday, and also by those who are jealous of any interference with the course of Sunday trading. I hope we shall avoid a similar miscarriage of justice by the course His Majesty's Government propose, and I earnestly trust that the Joint Committee which His Majesty's Government intend to appoint will be able to evolve a measure which shall set at rest this extremely difficult and important question.

THE DUKE OF NORTHUMBERLAND: My Lords, I think my noble friend Lord Avebury, and those who acted with him last year on the Select Committee, are to be congratulated upon the reception which His Majesty's Government have given to the Resolution now before the House. I confess I was rather surprised to hear from the noble Marquess who has just sat down the view which the Government took last year on the measure as it came from that Committee. I do not remember any such drastic condemnation of it at the time, and I, for my part, am sorry to hear so much said to-day, especially by the most rev. Primate, about the insufficiency of the inquiry before that Committee. I quite understand the line taken by His Majesty's Government, that if this question is to be considered at all it should be considered in the abstract and not with regard to any particular Bill. But I anticipate that when the inquiry is held, whatever it may be, very little more information will be obtained than was discovered by the Select Committee last year.

The impression left on my mind by the evidence which we got from every part of the country was that the difficulties were not really as great as they were supposed to be. There was one exception, and it has already been mentioned in the course of discussion to-night—I refer to the Jews. No doubt the position of the Jews is one of great difficulty, and the Committee endeavoured, as far as they could, to meet that difficulty; and if the inquiry which is now to be instituted results in better means being put forward of overcoming the difficulty I am sure we shall all be very glad. As regards the position of the consumer, which has been made so much of to-night, we gathered from the evidence placed before us that the class of persons who can only trade on Sundays is much smaller than I myself should have anticipated before I served on that Committee. A very large proportion of the working classes who trade on Sundays could trade on Saturday afternoons perfectly well if they pleased. As a matter of fact they go to the public-houses on Saturday and purchase articles of food on Sunday; and a part of the evidence we had before us went to show that as a collateral benefit of a Bill of this kind we should have less drinking on Saturday afternoons.

Perhaps the best answer as to the difficulty of the consumer is the fact that 160 trades unions have petitioned in favour of the Bill. I imagine that those trades unions know the difficulties of the consumer quite as well, if I may say so without disrespect, as noble Lords in this House. I quite appreciate what the noble Lord the First Lord of the Admiralty said as to the difference between the men who run shops and the shop assistants, but I am afraid he will find that it is impossible to make any distinction. If A keeps his shop open, B must keep his open; and, therefore, if you say A may keep his shop open because he has no assistant, and B must not because he has an assistant, the result will be to make unfair competition between the two, which I am sure Parliament would never sanction.

I do not want at this stage to occupy the time of the House further. If there is to be another inquiry by all means let it take place. I do hope that it will be exhaustive, and that no unnecessary delay will take place in forming the Committee, in the taking of evidence, and in reporting upon it, because I cannot too strongly emphasise the fact that this is an increasing evil, and that everyday nothing is done the question becomes more and more grave and the problem more and more difficult to solve.

*LORD KINNAIRD: My Lords, I wish in a few words to thank His Majesty's Government for consenting to the appointment of a Joint Committee of the two Houses to consider this question and to say that I am sure this will meet the wishes of a great many of those who are deeply interested in this subject. I agree with the noble Duke who has just sat down that a very large proportion of the working classes who trade on Sundays could very well trade on Saturday afternoons, and that the difficulties with regard to the consumer, which have been made so much of, are greatly exaggerated. That Sunday trading is on the increase no one will deny, and it is very important that the subject should receive the serious and early attention of His Majesty's Government. One matter which is clearly brought home to those who study our hospitals is the increasing need of rest for those who are suffering from nervous disorders, and I believe it will be brought out by the joint Committee which it is proposed to appoint that there is a national danger in the pressure which is, at present, being brought on our large operative classes, and especially on those who will be the mothers of future generations. Anyone who goes into our large establishments and sees the tremendous pressure at which work is done will agree that the decision at which His Majesty's Government have arrived is a right decision. I would also express the earnest hope that this will not merely be an inquiry which will end when the Committee have received the evidence but that the unanimous Report of the Committee will be that there is an urgent need that something should be done, and that His Majesty's Government will act upon the recommendation. I beg, on behalf of many who are taking a deep interest in this subject, to thank His Majesty's Government for the assurance they have given.

*LORD AVEBURY: My Lords, I will not detain the House for more than a moment or two in replying to the discussion which has taken place on my Motion. With regard to the Jews, very important evidence was given before the Select Committee. Mr. Alexander, who represented that body, suggested certain modifications in the Bill, subject to which, he said, they would not oppose the measure. At the end of his evidence Mr. Alexander was asked—

> "The final conclusion you would wish the Committee to arrive at is that your committee would not oppose the Bill providing the two Amendments you have suggested were conceded?"

And his answer to that question was—

> "We should not oppose it provided these two Amendments were conceded."

The Committee endeavoured to meet his view on those two Amendments, and consequently the Jewish community took no further part in opposing that Bill.

The noble Lord the First Lord of the Admiralty made a distinction between shopkeepers who employ assistants and those who do not. During the thirty years in which I have been endeavouring to carry out the views of the shopkeeper in these matters our strongest supporters have been the keepers of the very small shops. To the very small shopkeepers who has to be in the shop himself it is most important that the hours should be reasonable, and the result has been that the strongest support we have always had from the beginning of this agitation has come from the small shopkeepers. Much has been said this evening with respect to inquiry. May I remind the House that the Bill dealt with the whole question of Sunday trading, and the Select Committee understood that the whole question was before them. We had the advantage of the presence of Lord Belper, as representing the Government, on that Committee, and at the end of the proceedings I asked the noble Lord if there was any more evidence he desired, and he replied in the negative. I doubt if it will be found that there is much more evidence to procure, nor do I understand in what direction more evidence is required. The shopkeepers and the working classes were satisfied with the Bill as it stood. The Bill did not alter the law; all it did was to increase the fine, so as to make the law as it stands effective. At the same time I fully admit all that has been said as to the importance of the question, and I feel therefore that we cannot but accept the suggestion of my noble friend Lord Tweedmouth. We have not only to carry the Bill through this House but through the other House, and it will be a great step in the right direction if we can elicit the support of the other House in the movement. I would only express the hope that there will be no unnecessary delay, and that the Joint Committee may get to work as soon as possible.

On Question, Motion agreed to.

LORD TWEEDMOUTH: I now beg to move the Resolution with regard to the appointment of a Joint Committee.

Moved to resolve, "That it is desirable that a Joint Committee of both Houses be appointed to inquire into the subject of Sunday trading."—(*Lord Tweedmouth.*)

On Question, Motion agreed to.

Ordered, that a message be sent to the Commons to communicate this Resolution, and to desire their concurrence.

House adjourned at Twenty minutes before Six o'clock to Monday next, a quarter before Eleven o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Friday, 9th March, 1906.

The House met at Twelve of the clock.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS [LORDS].

Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in respect of the following Bills comprised in the Report laid upon the Table by Mr. Speaker as intended to originate in the House of Lords, they have certified that the Standing Orders have not been complied with, viz.:—Folkstone, Sandgate, and Hythe Tramways (No. 1); Folkestone, Sandgate, and Hythe Tramways (No. 2).

PRIVATE BILL PETITIONS [LORDS] (STANDING ORDERS NOT COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Reports from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the Petitions for the following Bills, originating in the Lords, the Standing Orders have not been complied with, viz.:—Folkestone, Sandgate, and Hythe Tramways (No. 1) [Lords]; Folkestone, Sandgate, and Hythe Tramways (No. 2) [Lords].

Ordered, That the Reports be referred to the Select Committee on Standing Orders.

PETITIONS.

LAND VALUES (ASSESSMENT AND RATING) BILL.

Petition from Chester, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

PUBLIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS (RELIGIOUS TEACHING).

Petition from Biddenham, against alteration of Law; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

INTERMEDIATE EDUCATION (IRELAND).

Copy presented, of Rule made by the Intermediate Education Board for Ireland making an alteration in the Honours

Course, Irish, Middle Grade Programme, 1906 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

SUPERANNUATION ACT, 1884.

Copy presented, of Treasury Minute, declaring that Richard Hickson, labourer, Royal Small Arms Factory, Enfield, War Office, was appointed without a Civil Service Certificate, through inadvertance on the part of the Head of his Department [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

EAST INDIA (MINERAL CONCESSIONS).

Address for "Return of the Mineral Concessions granted in India during the years 1889 to 1904 inclusive, showing the position and extent of the areas granted, names of grantees, and terms of grant."—(*Mr. Charles Schwann.*)

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Postal Deliveries in Aberdeen.

MR. PIRIE (Aberdeen, N.): To ask the Postmaster-General if his attention has been called to the unequal postal deliveries within the municipal boundaries of Aberdeen, and to the fact that the district of Woodside is deprived of the last delivery at night; and whether, with a view of rectifying this, he will consider the possibility of the despatch of the letter bags to that district by the corporation tramway system instead of by rail, as at present.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) In the case of Aberdeen, as in many other cases, it is not practicable for the municipal boundaries of a town to be accepted in all respects as the boundaries of the town delivery area. Considering the small number of letters which would fall into a later delivery, the district of Woodside appears to be sufficiently well served at present. But it will be necessary to revise the delivery arrangements generally when the new office is occupied, and the matter will then be carefully considered. There would be no advantage, at present, in making use of the tramway instead of the railway.

Duties of Unestablished Learners at Clones Post Office.

MR. SLOAN (Belfast, S.): To ask the Postmaster-General whether his attention has been called to the system in force at Clones and other provincial post offices, in which unestablished learners with small pay, are placed upon money order and other counter duties involving monetary risk, and are required to make good all deficiencies incurred on these duties; and what action, if any, does he propose taking in this matter.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) Though experienced officers are as a rule employed on duties involving monetary responsibility, it is sometimes necessary to entrust such duties to junior officers, and even to learners when acting as substitutes for sorting clerks and telegraphists. The general rule that officers shall make good losses resulting from their errors is not enforced in those cases in which the circumstances appear to justify its suspension.

Duties of Male and Female Telegraphists in Enniskillen Post Office.

MR. JAMES O'CONNOR (Wicklow, W.): To ask the Postmaster-General why, in view of the repeated assurances of successive Postmasters-General, that female telegraphists should not be placed upon male telegraphists' duties where any undue hardship would be inflicted upon the latter, in the Enniskillen post office, where the amount of night duty performed by the male staff is above the average, a female learner has been placed upon one of the male day duties during the past six months, and permanent arrangements made which will increase the number of night duties imposed on the male staff.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) I will cause inquiry to be made in regard to the distribution of work at the Enniskillen post office, and I will send a reply to the hon. Member.

Post Offices Under Guarantee.

LIEUTENANT - COLONEL PHILIPPS (Southampton): To ask the Postmaster-General whether he can state the total number of telegraph offices, post offices, and money order offices respectively, under guarantee by public bodies or private individuals on the 31st December, 1905; the total amount of such guarantees; and the total amount actually receivable from the guarantors on account of such guarantees during the previous twelve months.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) I will have a Return prepared and will send it to the hon. Member.

Hours Worked by Goods Porters at Goole (Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway).

MR. BELL (Derby): To ask the President of the Board of Trade if he will obtain a Return of the hours worked by porter sellers, and all the goods porters employed at Goole, Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway, for each day of October, November, and December 1905.

(*Answered by Mr. Lloyd-George.*) The railway company have already been asked for a Return of the hours of all their goods porters at Goole for a fortnight ended 24th ultimo, and, when that Return is received, I shall be happy to consider what further action should be taken.

Italian Customs Duty on Imported Pilchards.

MR. DUNN (Cornwall, Camborne): To ask the President of the Board of Trade whether the Italian Government has recently imposed a duty of 6 lire per cask, 100 chilogrammi, on English pilchards; whether he is aware that Spanish pilchards are admitted into Italy free of duty, by virtue of the Italio-Spanish commercial treaty; and whether, seeing that our commercial treaty with Italy contains the most-favoured-nation clause, representations will be made to the Italian Government, with a view to the withdrawal of such duty.

(*Answered by Mr. Lloyd-George.*) Pilchards in brine of whatever origin are dutiable in Italy at the rate named in the Question. There is no commercial treaty, at present, between Italy and Spain, and no discrimination against English pilchards.

Districts Patrolled by and Pace of Steamers "Helga," and "Granuaile," on West Coast of Ireland.

MR. BOLAND (Kerry, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state the average and the maximum speed obtainable by the steamers "Helga" and "Granuaile," in carrying out their duties of patrolling the West Coast of Ireland; and can he say what are the extreme geographical limits to which their duties extend in this respect.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) In the interests of fishing protection, it is not considered desirable to publish the average and maximum speeds of these steamers, but I am informed that neither has ever failed, for lack of speed, to capture a steam trawler found fishing illegally. Speaking generally, the duties of these steamers are limited to territorial waters around the whole coast of Ireland, but the steamers also enforce the provisions of a few of the Department's byelaws which affect extra territorial areas.

Salaries of Principal Teachers in Irish and English National Schools.

MR. SLOAN: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he can state the lowest salary paid to principals of national schools with an average attendance of over 100 pupils, and for schools with an average of over 200, and the same for schools with an average of over 300; and if he can state the corresponding salary for similar schools in England and Scotland.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The Commissioners of National Education inform me that the lowest salary paid in such cases is the commencing salary under the general scale, viz., £56 for a man and £44 for a woman, in both cases independent of capitation grant, which is at least £15 a year. The payment of such minimum salaries, however, only arises in cases in which the local managers, in the exercise of the discretion which the Commissioners' rules confer upon them, see fit to appoint to the principal charge of these important schools persons whose previous service as national teachers has been very short. These salaries carry triennial increments, contingent upon favourable reports. The Commissioners have no authoritative information upon the Question as regards England and Scotland.

Special Consideration for Teachers in large Schools in Ireland.

MR. SLOAN: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether there is any rule or Minute connected with the National Board of

Education entitling teachers of large schools to special consideration; if so, can he say how often it has been put in force, and how many teachers have received monetary consideration as a consequence.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The following is the rule of the Commissioners of National Education which bears on this subject:—112 (e) Assistants on promotion to principalships receive, as a rule, initial salaries equal to their salaries as assistants, but if highly classed under the old rules, or if appointed to large and important schools, they receive special consideration. The Commissioners inform me that teachers have received the benefit of this rule in numerous instances, but that it would not be possible to state the number of such cases without a careful examination of the records of their office since the introduction of the new system of payments in 1900.

Infant Males in Boys' Schools.

MR. JAMES O'CONNOR: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether, in the case of parents who desire to send their infant boys to boys' schools, he would direct the Board of Education in Ireland to respect parental rights in this matter by exempting the children of such parents from the application of Rule 127b.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The rule in question is as follows:—127 (b). Boys under seven years of age are ineligible for enrolment in a boys' school where there is not a mistress, unless—(1) there is no suitable school under a mistress available in the locality, or (2) the probable effect of this rule will be the loss of an assistant teacher to the school. On the occurrence of a vacancy for an assistant, a mistress should be appointed, otherwise no further exemption as regards the prohibition of the enrolment of boys under seven years of age can be granted. The Commissioners of National Education inform me that they cannot sanction any exemptions from the operation of the rule other than those provided for by the rule itself. If boys under seven years of age should be sent by their parents to boys' schools in other cases, the attendance of such infant boys cannot be included by the teachers in the calculation of the average attendances of their schools.

LAND TENURE BILL.

Order for Second Reading read.

*MR. AGAR-ROBARTES (Cornwall, Bodmin) said that this Bill required no apology, for it was a step forward, and its promoters desired to solve one of the greatest and most complex questions concerning agriculture. He was not one of those who believed that there were no remedies for agricultural depression and that year by year rural depopulation must go on unchecked and land go out of cultivation. On the contrary, he believed there were many ways and means by which the condition of rural life and the fostering of the great industry of agriculture could be influenced, not by the quack remedies prevalent of late, but remedies such as were in the Bill he had the honour to introduce. The measure was modest and moderate. It brought forward no new principle, and made no attack on the rights of property. It was not directed against the landlords as a class or against the good landlord; it was directed against the bad landlord. The promoters of the Bill asked for no privilege for one class against another; all they asked for was fair play and justice—that the tenant farmer should reap the full profit accruing for the capital he put into the soil. He was convinced that unless they encouraged the tenant to do his best and put his back into his work, compensating him fully and fairly for improvements and giving him a free hand, they crippled his enterprise and spirits to improve the land, not for himself alone, but for the welfare and benefit of the nation at large. Until our system of land tenure was radically altered, agriculture could not prosper as it might. It had been the tendency in the past to stand still and let agriculture look after itself. Both Parties had been oblivious of many grievances crying aloud for redress. He held no brief for that much-abused class the landlords, who in many cases were wrongly and unjustly abused; but he fully recognised that there were some landlords who required a law to remind them that the ownership of land had its duties as well as its privileges. He ventured to say that every clause of this Act was now enjoyed by the tenantry on his father's estate. If every landowner managed his property on the same lines and with the same justice as the President of the Board of Agriculture he would tear up this Bill and would consider it a waste of time to proceed with it. He regretted, however, to say that this was far from the case. He considered that this Bill was of vital importance in many districts. He did not claim that it would usher in the millennium of agricultural prosperity, or that by the shake of a magic wand they could turn England from the pleasure-house of the few into the treasure-house of the many; but he believed the Liberal Party were agreed on the principle that they should treat agricultural land as a raw material and he expected little or no opposition unless it came from the remnant of the wreck of that moribund Party which used to occupy the benches which the Ministerialists now adorned. He felt sure he should receive a certain amount of support from hon. Members sitting on the Opposition side, because they must recognise that the principle of the Bill was just, and points of detail upon which they might differ could be settled in Committee. The principle of the Bill was that the capital of the tenant farmer should be secured against confiscation. No man ought to object to such a principle, and no good landlord would object to it. The first clause proposed that such sums as fairly represented the value of the improvements to the incoming tenant should be paid to the man who made them. The landlord was thus safeguarded, because if the alteration was worth nothing he paid nothing. On the other hand, if the alteration was worth something the tenant would get something. He would demand and justly obtain compensation for improving the holding by his own enterprise, capital, and industry. The next clause recognised the undoubted right of the tenant to obtain compensation for damage done by game which he had not the lawful right to kill. He could see no objection to that. If a man's crops were injured and he was unable to defend himself, it was only fair, right, and just that he should receive compensation for that injury. By the present law the tenant's crops might be ravaged, but he was allowed no redress. That was absolutely indefensible. It might be argued that it was possible that the game which did the damage did not belong to the landlord, but he had it in his power to give the tenant the opportunity of taking his revenge by killing those alien birds. The next clause proposed to extend the operation of the Ground Game Act, and he fancied it would appeal to the sporting instincts of hon. Members. Personally he would rather see several guns used on a farm than that the place should be flooded with traps and wires; and he failed to see why the farmer should be debarred from killing the game in company with his friends. Then the Bill would permit the farmer to farm his land under different methods, instead of sticking to hard-and-fast rules, provided only the fertility of the soil was maintained. The next proposal was that the farmer should have a reasonable amount of security of tenure. It was impossible for any man to feel secure if he knew that if on some occasion some of his opinions, political or religious, differed from those of his landlord he might be forced to leave his farm; and he would remind the House that that was more serious to the farmer than to the landlord. It cost little to obtain another tenant, but it cost the tenant considerable sums in moving, and caused him considerable worry and trouble in obtaining experience of a new farm. Therefore he considered this perhaps the most important clause in the Bill. The word "unreasonable" might be open to a certain amount of criticism, but he did not hesitate to say that the raising of rent on a tenant's improvements, so as to cause him to quit his farm, was unreasonable. He should also say without hesitation that to compel a tenant to leave because he differed in religious or political views, came under the same heading. The following clause dealt with the Law of Distraint, and the remaining one with the laying down of permanent pasture. If permanent pasture was of no value it could easily be ploughed up, but if, on the other hand, it increased the value of the holding, it was only fair and just that the landlord should pay for it. The same argument would apply to fruit trees and orchards. There was a great prospect of success before fruit growers. He admitted that many of them had been hit lately by the increase in the price of sugar by the iniquitous Sugar Convention; but when this costly legacy from the late Government had been dealt with he ventured to say that there would be greater prospects for the fruit farmer, and it was with that object the clause had been inserted. The last clause cheapened and simplified the process of arbitration, and that also was one of the most important clauses. A single arbitrator, who should of course know something of the agricultural district and be acquainted with the various methods of farming in that district, would, to his mind, be a benefit to all the parties concerned, and save endless disputes and disagreements. That was, in brief, the Bill which he had the honour to submit to the House. He had only touched each clause briefly, for it would be presumption on his part to detain the House at any length. In conclusion he appealed to hon. Members to support this Bill on account of its moderation, for this was only an instalment of a larger policy and one which by no means went the whole hog. He felt that he was assured of support from the Ministerial Benches and from the Labour Members, for they would recognise that the farmer and the agricultural labourer, through their own shortsightedness, had no organisation; they were unorganised and defenceless, and unprotected against the aggressions of any bad landowner, and this Bill would not affect the good landowner. He also appealed to the Opposition Benches for a certain amount of support, for just as they had claimed in the past to have a monopoly of Imperialism, so he would not mind betting —or, he ought to say, he would not mind hazarding a guess—that every one of them who represented an agricultural constituency had had his constituency placarded far and wide with "Vote for So-and-so, the farmer's friend." If that was the case he felt that they owed to him a debt of gratitude for introducing this Bill, thus enabling them so early in the session to prove their friendship for the farmer, to show that their affection was real and genuine, and to demonstrate that these self-styled friends of the farmer were their friends indeed. He begged to move.

*Mr. SOARES (Devonshire, Barnstaple) said he rose to second this Bill. He thought he should be expressing the wishes of the whole House if he congratulated the Mover of this Bill upon his extremely able maiden speech. He should also like to thank him on behalf of the farmers of his own constituency for introducing this measure, and he was sure that all the farmers in the West of England owed to him a debt of gratitude for so doing. This was by no means an ordinary Bill, for in the west of England it was known as "Lambert's Land Tenure Bill" or "the Farmers' Charter," and he did not know a single farmer, either Liberal or Tory, who was not in favour of this measure. He did not wonder that this was the case because, as the hon. Member had already pointed out, one of the main principles of the Bill was to protect the capital of the tenant from confiscation. In the last Parliament he had the honour of seconding this Bill when it was introduced by the hon. Member for South Molton, and he felt sure that although the hon. Member he alluded to was now in an official position he still took the same interest in this measure as he did when he was in a position of greater freedom and less responsibility. On the occasion to which he alluded the measure was defeated by a majority of sixty-one, but this was a new Parliament and a very different one from the last, and represented very different interests. He was in great hopes that to-day they would succeed in carrying the measure by a large majority. The Bill dealt with the rights and duties of two classes of people who were directly interested in agriculture, namely, the landlord and the tenant. There was of course another large and important class concerned—he referred to the agricultural labourers, but they were not dealt with by this Bill, and therefore their interests would have to be safeguarded by another measure. He thought it was extremely important that the State should recognise the rights and duties of the three classes of men who were directly interested in agriculture, who directly got their livelihood from the soil, namely, the landlords, the tenants and the agricultural labourers. That the State was supremely interested in this question nobody could deny, because agriculture was still the largest industry in the State, and it still employed more men than any other industry. Therefore it was necessary that the State should, as far as possible, see that the utmost amount which the land was capable of producing was got out of the land, and that the rights and duties of the people interested were equitably adjusted so far as that end could be accomplished by legislation. What were the rights and duties of these three classes of people who were so deeply interested in the land? He thought in the first place that the agricultural labourer was entitled to be well housed and to receive such wages as would enable him to bring up his family as useful citizens. The tenant farmer was entitled to a fair interest on his capital, and to receive such a share of the profits as would enable him to bring up his family in a suitable position. What remained of the profits went to the landlord as rent. That, he thought, was the true economic position of the case, and those conditions should be brought about by the Legislature, so far as it could do so. He did not wish to be misunderstood on the point. He did not think that any of them had any sympathy for idlers, for the dissolute, or for incompetent tenant farmers, but they were all in favour of doing something for the good labourers and tenant farmers, and it was because this Bill protected the interests of good tenants that he was here to support it. It must be clearly understood that this Bill would not help bad tenant farmers in any way, and that it would not injure good landlords. The only thing it would do was bring up bad landlords to the level of good landlords, and enable the utmost possible amount to be got out of the land. It would secure to the tenant farmers the benefit of his own brains and his own improvements. They had been told for the last ten years that the interests of landlord, tenant farmer, and agricultural labourer were identical, and that if they did anything for one it would trickle through to the others, but somehow or other, during the last ten years, it had always been the landlord to whom the benefit had gone. Looking at the matter from one point of view their interests were identical. It was perfectly true that they were all interested in agriculture, but looked at from another point of view, namely, as between each other, it could be seen at once that their interests were very diverse. It was the interest of the agricultural labourer to get as high wages as he could; and it was the interest of the tenant farmer that the wages should be as low as possible, consistent with the good cultivation of his land. It was to the interest of the tenant farmer that his rent should be low and it was to the interest of the landlord that he should get as much rent as possible for the use of his land. He should like to remind the House of the position of the tenant farmers. They had no great organisation behind them, and they had no great trade unions at their back. They came to the House asking a measure of justice and equity, and, for his part, he thought their claim should be treated with the greatest consideration. The great principle of this Bill was contained in Clause 5 which gave the tenant farmer security of tenure. This was a boon for which the tenant farmer had been craving for many years past, and for his part he thought they were entitled to it. Supposing a tenant farmer was turned out of his farm owing to some caprice of the landlord, or owing to his rent being unreasonably raised, what was the position of that man? He had to break up his home, leave his friends, and give up any public position, such as membership of a board of guardians, to which he had been elected. He had also to lose the results of the scientific knowledge which he had gained as to the capacity of his farm. That was a very important point indeed, because that scientific knowledge was only gained by great expenditure of money and skill. He himself knew fields on which there were two or three different kinds of soil, and on which the tenant farmer had to experiment with various kinds of manure in order to get the greatest possible amount out of the land. All that meant skill, energy, and expenditure of money, and it was in order to compensate the tenant farmer, so far as monetary compensation could do it—and monetary compensation could not do everything—

that this Bill was introduced. Of course, there were many other points contained in the Bill besides security of tenure. He wished to impress on the House the fact that this Bill only gave the good tenant compensation. For instance, Clause 1, which gave compensation for improvements, only gave compensation for those improvements which had benefited the soil. If the work done by the farmer was worth nothing, then he would get nothing. The good tenant would get protection, and the bad tenant would be left where he ought to be left. Then there was a clause in the Bill which provided that the landlord's consent should not be necessary to the laying out of land in permanent pasture and other purposes. To his mind that was a most important clause. It was unfortunately the case that many landlords were not in a good pecuniary position, and what happened was that when a tenant asked a landlord in that position for consent to lay out permanent pasture, he would probably be refused, because the landlord knew that he could only recover his outlay from the land after a long period of years. If permanent pasture was a good improvement for the farmer, then surely it was right that the land should be used in that way to its utmost capacity. Surely it was in the interest of the State that it should be used to its utmost capacity, and this clause in the Bill would enable that to be done. With regard to the abolition of the limitation to the use of one gun in killing ground game which the tenant was entitled to kill, he was quite sure that where they got a [tenant farmer to take an interest in sport they were doing a considerable amount of good to the shooting tenant. He was glad to think also that, under this Bill, the tenant farmer would get compensation for damage done by game he was not entitled to kill. He remembered that when the Bill was before the House on the last occasion they were told that that was all very well, but that the landlord would have to compensate the tenant for game he was not entitled to kill. But it was forgotten that game belonged to the man on whose land it was for the time being, and that that man had a right to kill the game. Therefore either the landlord or the tenant had a right to kill the game. If the tenant had the right he would get no compensation under the Bill. If the landlord had the right to kill the game, and it was not killed, the landlord would have to pay compensation. He was aware that it was not in accordance with shooting etiquette to kill game which came from other people's covers. But he did not really think they could ask a tenant farmer to be put to a loss of money because of such matters of courtesy. He wished to say a word with regard to the position of the Liberal Party in respect to this Bill. He was glad to say that when the Bill was before the House on the last occasion the Prime Minister voted for it, and they all knew that the right hon. Gentleman was a man who meant what he said and said what he meant. The Prime Minister was not the kind of man to vote for a Bill in opposition, and then not support it when he had the power to help it. In the great speech which the Prime Minister delivered in the Albert Hall he promised the tenant farmer security of tenure. This Bill provided security of tenure, so that he thought they might ask the Government to help them with it. Then they must remember that a leaflet was issued by the Liberal Publication Department with regard to this Bill. The Liberal Publication Department had received a good deal of abuse from hon. Gentlemen opposite lately, but he was quite sure that those on the Ministerial side of the House were proud of that Department. They were prepared to stick to the leaflet which was scattered broadcast in the agricultural constituencies. It gained him votes, and he was sure that other Members would say that it gained them votes. He was sure that so far as the agricultural constituencies were concerned they had a mandate for this Bill. That might be of importance with regard to the future of the Bill because they knew that Lord St. Aldwyn, better known in this House as Sir Michael Hicks Beach, had said that the House of Lords would not oppose any Bill for which the country had given a mandate. He sincerely hoped that not only would this Bill pass successfully through all its stages in the House of Commons, but that when it went up to the House of Lords it would be treated as a Bill for which the people had given a mandate, so that it might be placed on the Statute-book during the present session.

Question proposed, "That this Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Agar-Robartes.*)

*LORD HELMSLEY (Yorkshire, N.R., Thirsk) moved the rejection of the Bill on the ground that it would be injurious to the real interests of all classes connected with agriculture. He said that according to hon. Gentlemen opposite the country gave them a considerable number of mandates at the last election. Those hon. Gentlemen appeared to think that because they got in with a large majority therefore each individual who voted for them must necessarily have approved each and all of those several things for which hon. Gentlemen opposite had at various times during the session claimed a mandate. The Bill had been described by its authors as a Bill to amend the tenure under which agricultural land was held. He wished the hon. Member for Bodmin had brought in one of those other measures of agricultural interest which had been asked for by all the representative bodies of agriculturists rather than this measure, which, he ventured to say, was not asked for and would not be supported by any representative body of agriculturists in this country. The assumption upon which this Bill was based was that all the evils under which agriculture unfortunately groaned at present were due to the system of land tenure. He did not believe that assumption was true, because freeholders in this country who farmed their own land were not, he thought, in a better position than agricultural tenants. Did they make large profits; were they less subject to bad seasons; were they able to conduct their business in a more satisfactory manner than other agricuturists? [MINISTERIAL cries of "Yes."] Hon. Gentlemen opposite said "yes;" then perhaps some other speaker would be able to explain to him why it was that the yeomen farmers who used to be the backbone of the agricultural community were now almost extinct, and in the majority of cases had had to give up their freeholds and take farms under landlords, at least if they had been fortunate enough to rescue from the wreck of their fortunes sufficient capital to enable them to take a farm as a tenant under a landlord. If the House would allow him, he would quote the words of one of the witnesses who gave evidence before the Royal Commission on Agriculture in 1897. That witness said—

> "We have had a good many yeomen in the county of Norfolk, and I say they are much the hardest hit of all. They have got to bear both the losses of the landlord and the losses of the tenant, and there have been the most disastrous failures."

Another witness said—

> "The position of these men is not only worse than tenants, because they have a higher rent in the shape of interest, but because to the land they have bought they are irrevocably bound, for they cannot sell it without going out as ruined men, and they cannot let it for a sufficient rent to pay the interest on their mortgages."

Then in the general Report of the Royal Commission it was stated—

> "It would seem that very generally occupying owners, whether yeomen or small freeholders are weighted with a burden of debt which places them in such times as have been recently experienced in a worse position than the tenant farmer, and that they have suffered from the depression as much as any class."

He contended, therefore, that he had justified his statement that the assumption upon which the Bill was founded was not based upon fact. The Bill altered very considerably the relations at present existing between landlord and tenant. The question was to whose advantage was it to be? Standing there as he did, and as the hon. Member for Bodmin did, as a member by fortune and not by fault of the landlord class, he did not propose to argue the question whether this Bill would be an advantage or a disadvantage to the landlords, but he wanted to point out that no matter what the intentions of hon. Members in bringing in this Bill might be—because he knew that their intentions were good — he ventured to say that the measure would be disadvantageous to the tenant and would not conduce to his benefit in any way whatever. If this measure were passed the interest of the landlord in his property would be considerably diminished. He did not mean necessarily the landlord's financial interest, but his interest in seeing that his own property was conducted for the benefit, not only of himself but of the tenants. The landlord's interest would be diminished in a number of ways. If Clause 7 of the Bill were compared with Clause 3 of the Schedule of the Agricultural Holdings Act of 1900 it would be seen that it was not a mere extension of the Agricultural Holdings Act, but involved a change of principle. That change of principle was that improvements, or alleged improvements, not only of a temporary but of a permanent character, could be made without the consent of the landlord. Clause 4 said that the landlord was not to make contracts or agreements as to the methods of farming which were to be carried on. Again, under that clause, the landlord's interest in his property would be lessened. And under Clause 5 the landlord would have practically no discretion whatever as to whether, at the determination of the tenancy, he would renew the lease or not. The tenant had only to sue the landlord for unreasonable and capricious eviction and the latter would know how difficult it was to prove bad farming, and would avoid litigation by renewing the tenancy as a matter of course, whether the land was farmed well or badly. All these things would diminish the landlord's interest in his land. He did not wish to be misunderstood on this question. It must not be supposed for one moment that he was out of sympathy with tenants who were capriciously evicted out of their holdings, although, as had been admitted by the hon. Gentleman opposite, such was rarely the case. In such an event he would like to see the tenant compensated; but he suggested that the clause of the Bill dealing with that subject could not by any possibility be successfully worked, and that it would not conduce to good farming or to any advantage to the tenant himself. Now it being admitted that these proposals would diminish the interest of the landlord in his own property, he should like to point out the effect on the tenant himself. The first result would be the shutting up of the landlord's purse. He knew that people who were intimately acquainted with tenant farmers—and he claimed to be the friend of a great many—were aware that tenant farmers looked to their landlords to help them in a great many ways—in permanent improvements in keeping buildings in repair, in putting up barns and cover, fold yards, etc. If tenants were allowed to make these improvements without the landlord's consent the landlord would not be prepared to put his hand in his pocket to the same extent as at present. Some fortunate tenants might be able to make these improvements for themselves; but many others would find that it was not convenient for them to put money out in making these improvements, and the ultimate result would be that they would remain unmade. The next result would be a tendency on the part of landlords to absent themselves from their estates. He did not think that, their interest being diminished, they were likely to remain on their estates where the chief interest was in seeing that their estates were well and properly conducted. He was not going into any argument against absentee landlordism, especially in the presence of hon. Members on the Irish Benches, but no one would deny that absenteeism was a very real and grave disadvantage to all engaged in agriculture. It seemed to him that the diminution of the interest of the landlord would lead to the discouragement of the investment of capital in land. Agriculture suffered a good deal at the present time from the fact that there was not enough capital on the land, and if this House were going to make a landlord merely a rent collecting machine it would not attract people to that position. Another objection which the Opposition took to the Bill was that it tended to set up a system of dual ownership. By Clause 7, Sub-section 2, hon. Members would see that the repair of the buildings was one of the things allowed to be done without the consent of the landlord. The word "repair" was a somewhat elastic phrase, and he found it difficult to draw a distinction between "repairing," "renovating," "altering," or even "rebuilding," the premises on the holding. If they once brought that principle into the tenure of land in this country, they would be setting out upon the system which did incalculable harm in Ireland, and it was, he thought, chiefly owing to the fact that in Ireland the buildings were the property of the tenant and

Lord Helmsley.

the holdings themselves belonged to the landlord that all those disasters which were not yet finished to agricultural industry in Ireland had arisen. Another aspect of this question which hon. Gentlemen opposite seemed to forget entirely, was the position of the incoming tenant. It must be remembered that when extensive alterations were made by an occupying tenant it was the incoming tenant who had to pay for those improvements, or otherwise. Ministerialists were in favour of small holdings, as were a good many of those on the Opposition side of the House. His view was, that if they made it more difficult for the incoming tenant to take a holding they would make it more difficult for the small man, or for the labourer who had saved money, to take a farm, and the result of their legislation would be that the incoming tenant would require more capital than was needed at present. Therefore the smaller man would be shut out altogether from the possibility of taking a farm. Mr. Shaw Lefevre, in his book upon agrarian tenure, said that—

> "The question of compensation was rather one between the outgoing and incoming tenants than between the landlord and the tenant, and while it was proper that the outgoing tenant should be properly compensated for any outlay on the land, it was also desirable that the incoming tenant should not be hampered by large payments for which he had had no real benefit."

In the case of permanent pasture, the incoming tenant came in and found it had just been laid down, against the view of the landlord and his agent. In a few years it became apparent that the view of the landlord and his agent was the true one, and that the soil was not suitable for permanent pasture, and the fields had to be ploughed up. What became of the money which had been paid for the alleged improvements? They did not want to force the incoming tenant to pay for improvements of that kind, which might be of no real benefit whatever to him. There were other objections to the Bill. There was the proposal with regard to the breach of contract in existing tenancies under Clause 4, which he thought was a most undesirable feature. He did not think hon. Members would take any great exception to the clauses referring to game, but he hoped hon. Members opposite would realise that Clause 2, as proposed was exactly contrary to the intentions of the Ground Game Act, which was passed by an illustrious leader of their Party. So far from providing for the destruction of ground game, which did them injury, this Bill would have a tendency to induce tenants to preserve hares and rabbits for sporting purposes.

Mr. SOARES said the Bill only gave power to a tenant to give rights of sporting which he himself had a right to exercise.

*Lord HELMSLEY said he intended to refer to Clause 3 which dealt with hares and rabbits, which were very marketable articles, and for the purposes of sport he was not the one to quarrel with them. He could only express the hope that if the Bill were passed into law his friends the tenant farmers would do him the honour to ask him to join in the sport. Clause 2 was open to the objection which had been raised by an hon. Member, but which had not been answered. It was absurd, the principle being that if A rented a farm from B, the landlord, and C, the adjoining owner, did damage, B, the landlord of A, was to pay for it. That was a most peculiar principle of legislation, and as the clause stood he ventured to think it could not be said to cover only the case of where game owned by the landlord did damage to the property of the tenant, to which he should not object. He should like to quote a passage from the speech by Mr. Gladstone in 1890, which showed that hon. Members had departed very far from the principles advocated by that statesman. The right hon. Gentleman then declared that—"The most wholesome principle was that which now prevailed, the well working of which depended upon the wisdom and good conduct of the people concerned, and that was where the soil was owned by one set of men and cultivated by another set of men." The right hon. Gentleman on that occasion said—"He trusted that both here and elsewhere this system might be protected by the intelligent growth of good feeling on one side and on the other." He begged to move.

*MR. HICKS BEACH (Gloucestershire, Tewkesbury), in seconding the Amendment, said he must first of all apologise to the House for inflicting upon them yet another maiden speech, by a new Member, but he was sure the House would be good enough to extend to him the same consideration that had been shown to other hon. Members in similar circumstances. He supported the Amendment to the Bill because he did not believe that the measure was one which was asked for by the agricultural community at large. It was the same Bill as was introduced by the present Civil Lord of the Admiralty in 1901; the arguments for and against it were then thrashed out on the Second Reading, which was rejected by a majority of sixty-one. A good deal of time had elapsed since then, but had the Chambers of Agriculture throughout the country shown any real desire to have a Bill of that sort brought into law? The only change of this nature, he ventured to say, which the Chambers of Agriculture asked for now was that the Agricultural Holdings Acts should be consolidated. He supposed that every Member on the Opposition as well as on the Ministerialist side of the House agreed that the tenant should have the right to receive compensation for the money he had spent on the improved cultivation of his farm, and he believed that under the Agricultural Holdings Acts of 1883 and 1900 the tenant was entitled to receive that compensation. Under the Agricultural Holdings Acts the tenant was entitled to compensation for improvements of three kinds—in the first place, for improvements in respect to which notice to the landlord was not required; secondly, for those of which notice was required; and, thirdly, those for which the consent of the landlord was required. This Bill would do away with the necessity of getting the consent of the landlord and of giving notice to the landlord in the case of improvements of an important character. He ventured to think this introduced a very dangerous principle. The landlord or his agent knew as much as, or more than, the tenant who had not been there long, about the natural capacity of the land, and their advice ought to be obtained as to improvements. Nothing had done more to depopulate the rural districts than the extensive laying down of land to permanent pasture, and if tenants were encouraged in future to lay it down *ad libitum* the Ministerialists would be encouraging rather than preventing the depopulation of the rural districts. Tenants nowadays were entitled to receive compensation for the money they laid out on their holdings, provided they had previously obtained the consent of the landlord to the expenditure, and he thought that to withdraw the right of the landlord to withold his consent, or to give the tenant the right to carry out the improvements without this consent, would be to take away from the landlords the interest they now had in their estates, and which had always led them to seek the improvement and prosperity of the property. A tenant might think that because he was able to grow fruit in the vale of Evesham he could also do so on the Cotswold hills, whereas anybody who had had experience of that part of the country would at once tell him that it would be a pure waste of money to plant orchards there. What would be the position? He might persist in planting the trees, and then the landlord would have to pay for them when the tenant went out of possession of the holding. [AN HON. MEMBER: No, no.] Why, he would like to ask, did hon. Members cry "No, no." [AN HON. MEMBER: Because it would not be an improvement.] The tenant, however, might think it was an improvement, and he doubted very much whether the hon. Members who had made the interruption would earn the gratitude of the farmers by thus defining the clause. Farmers would not thank them for the supposed privilege if the hon. Member's view of it was the right one. Further than that, a tenant who did such a thing would not appreciate any increase in the rent which he might be called upon to pay on renewing his tenancy, neither would the incoming tenant care for the increased valuation which might be demanded from him for the so-called improvement. As regarded the question of repairing buildings, and works for the provision of a water supply, that was also a very serious matter. He did not think that agricultural tenants would thank the promoters of this measure for giving them an opportunity of doing their own repairs, which were now carried out by the landlords, who found the tenants none too keen to do any work of that kind themselves. To give them the right to carry out repairs and structural alterations without obtaining the consent of the landlord was, to his mind, to introduce a very dangerous principle, and one that would not eventually turn out a very real advantage. Who knew more about the buildings of an estate and what was required than the landlord? He was able to carry out the repairs more cheaply than anybody else, because he kept a staff of estate workmen employed solely on that duty. A tenant in attempting to repair the buildings might make serious mistakes, and might seek to renovate them in such a way that the incoming tenant would find that they were perfectly unsuited to the farm, and yet either the landlord or the incoming tenant would have to pay compensation for them. Then, again, there was the question of planting strawberries, asparagus, and rhubarb. A tenant was now able to obtain compensation for such improvements without giving notice to the landlord, provided that he had already entered into an agreement to the effect that his holding might be used as a market garden. What could a tenant want more than that? He did not think that this particular provision of the Bill would tend to increase the interest which the landlord now took in his estate. If a tenant could at any time he chose put in a lot of strawberry plants, and at the end of two years, on giving up his holding, claim compensation, he was sure it would not be to the advantage of any one concerned. In conjunction with that clause, he would like to refer to Clause 5, which to his mind embodied a still more dangerous principle—the principle of the fixity of tenure—and fixity of rent. Hon. Members opposite had said that it was the main object of the Bill to give fixity of tenure. Was there, he would like to ask, any real case, or any real demand for a clause of that kind? [Cries of "Yes."] Well, hon. Members said there was, but he would like to ask what were the facts? There were, and undoubtedly had been, very few cases of capricious disturbance. Everybody regretted such cases when they did occur, and he would remind hon. Members of the Report of the Royal Commission on Agriculture, 1897, for in it the Commissioners declared their belief that landlords were most anxious to keep their tenants, that, indeed they often made great sacrifices to do so, and that instances of unfair or capricious disturbance were exceedingly rare. This clause of the Bill went directly against the view expressed by the Royal Commissioners, and it seemed to him that Clause 5, in conjunction with Clause 7, would tend to bring into this country a system of dual ownership of land, which in other parts of the world had been proved to be fraught with disastrous disadvantages, not only to landlords and tenants, but to agriculture generally. He would like to ask hon. Members had landlords in any other part of the world done more for their estates, or spent more money on the improvement of their estates, and on the improvement of the breeds of cattle, sheep, pigs, and horses, than the landlords of this country had done? Why had British landlords so acted? Simply because they were now able, as they had hitherto been, to manage their own estates as they liked. They were able to spend the money as they chose, and they had consequently spent large sums on improvements. Who, he would ask, had spent more money on improving the houses of the working classes in the country than the rich landlords of the present day? No doubt, hon. Members opposite during the recent general election loudly acclaimed that they wished to see the working classes in the country better housed, but they forgot to say who was to provide the money. Who were the people who had built the cottages in the villages and on their estates? Were they not the rich landlords? It was notorious that the mere building of a cottage was not a speculation which brought in a very large return, because the cost of the upkeep and the interest on the money invested was considerably in excess of the amount obtained for rent. But undoubtedly rich landlords had spent, and were still spending, large sums of money on the improvement of their cottages. They did not like to see their tenants badly housed, and if it was intended to deprive landlords of the right of managing their property in their own way, the effect would be to put a stop to this class of expenditure, and the condition of agricultural tenants and the labouring classes would become worse than it now was. There were one or two other points he would like to mention. Why did Clause 1 omit the words " On quitting his holding " ? Under this Bill, apparently, a tenant who held a farm on a yearly tenancy would be able to go to the landlord after a year and claim compensation for the improvements he had made on the farm during that year. Again, apparently under the Bill a tenant would be entitled to receive such compensation, and therefore he would be at one and the same time receiving money for an improvement he had carried out, and also for the privilege of enjoying that improvement. With regard to Sub-section 2, which inserted the words—

> "Or any claim for indemnification by the landlord under any custom or contract with the tenant,"

it was obvious to any fair-minded man that landlords and tenants should have equal opportunity of putting in their claims, and they should put in their claims at the same time. Under this clause the tenant could bring in his claim under statute before the termination of his tenancy; and besides that, he could bring in a claim under custom or contract, not before the termination of the tenancy; whereas the landlord was bound to bring in his claim before the termination of the tenancy. That, he maintained, would be unjust to the landlord. Again, with regard to the question of arbitration, why should agriculturists be compelled to submit to the ruling of one arbitrator, whereas in other disputes the parties had a right to submit the question to two arbitrators and one umpire ? He failed to see why agriculturists should not have the same privileges in this respect. Then as regarded game, he was sure that nobody on the Opposition side of the House would object to giving compensation to the tenant for damage done to his crops by game belonging to the landlord. But he thought that even the hon. Member for Bodmin would strongly object to paying the tenant compensation for damage done by game which did not belong to him. Supposing for instance that the hon. Member for Bodmin owned a bit of land on which certain damage had been done by game, and that that game came from an adjoining estate over which the hon. Member for Barnstaple had shooting rights. The hon. Member for Bodmin would be called upon to pay compensation; but if instead he preferred to shoot the pheasants belonging to the hon. Member for Barnstaple, as that hon. Member had suggested, he did not think that the latter would appreciate the kindness. So far as Clause 4 was concerned, it seemed to him that it would entail a practical breach of contract. It would introduce another very dangerous principle into the Bill, inasmuch as in fact it did away with any contract or agreement made between landlord and tenant. In conclusion he would ask the House not to waste its time in discussing this measure, which in the interest of the agricultural tenants was not required. He thought that if the promoters of the Bill, instead of passing a Motion calling upon the State to pay salaries to themselves, had devoted their attention to pressing upon the Government the necessity of giving a larger grant from the Imperial Exchequer for the relief of agricultural rates it would have been of much more advantage to the agricultural classes.

Amendment proposed—

> " To leave out from the word 'That,' to the end of the Question, in order to add the words, 'while admitting the desirability of remedying any legitimate grievance which may be proved to exist in regard to the occupation of their holdings by agricultural tenants, this House declines to assent to a Bill which conduces to dual ownership, which involves breach of contract, and which would seriously prejudice the position of the incoming tenant, as it considers that such changes would be injurious to the real interests of all classes connected with agriculture.'"—(*Viscount Helmsley.*)

Question proposed, " That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

MR. MUNRO FERGUSON (Leith Burghs) said although he had had no intention of intervening in this debate when he entered the House, he would like to say a few words, because he thought the hostility shown to the Bill was excessive. He did not agree with the hon. Member that the House was wasting its time in discussing it. On the contrary he thought that of all the Land Tenure Bills that had been introduced this was the most practical. It was not meant to deal with all the problems of the land question but only a small part. If the Bill had created dual ownership it certainly would not have received his support, but he frankly admitted that unless the law of landlord and tenant was made to work in a practical and satisfactory way to the persons concerned the only alternative would be occupying ownership, which was a thing he did not look forward to with any degree of pleasure, although perhaps it would be the best method under which to conduct agriculture. But this Bill did not create dual ownership. If a tenant were allowed to erect new buildings, no doubt that would be a long step towards dual ownership, but this Bill allowed nothing of the kind; it merely provided for the repair of existing buildings, and gave the owner a free hand in saying to what use the buildings should be put. The question of the construction of buildings was a most important one. It was said that the interest of the owner of a holding was diminished, but it could not be said that it was diminished by this Bill in any greater degree than it had been by the Agricultural Holdings Act. He quite admitted that a consideration of the Agricultural Holdings Acts was much wanted, and the same remark applied to a good many Acts. He did not think the interest of the owner was diminished, but he did think that the proposals contained in some of the clauses in the Bill constituted a distinct advance on the present footing of the relations between landlord and tenant. The clauses requiring that there should be a record of the condition of the holding when it was first taken, so that the rights of a subsequent tenant might be safeguarded, went a long way towards putting the relations between landlord and tenant on a satisfactory basis, and he thought the clause providing that disputes between landlord and tenant should, in default of an agreement being arrived at, be settled by an arbitrator appointed by the Board of Agriculture was one that should receive the assent of this House. If hon. Members were successful in proving their contention that this Bill set up anything in the nature of dual ownership, let them give specific cases where the state of things had occurred and then let them determine whether that matter should be settled by the arbitrator. Such a thing should be possible under this system of arbitration. These were, however, questions to be raised on the Committee stage of the Bill and were not points to invite the House to consider when they were discussing the main principles of the measure. To his mind the fact that the dealing with the question of the buildings was restricted to their repair left the control of the purpose for which the land was to be used very much in the hands of the landlords, and if the objections now brought forward with regard to the clause were upheld in Committee there could be no reason why an abitrator should not be called in to deal with that question. He did not admit that there were no complaints against the present system of land tenure. Those were complaints which were very far reaching. Many landlords thought they were very virtuous, and no doubt some were, but others were not. The landlords had no monopoly of virtue. In his opinion the extension of the system of arbitration proposed under this Bill was an admirable proposal. Then with regard to the proposals as to game. He had heard before that proposals of this kind would drive the landlords away from their estates, but he did not believe anything of the kind. It was surely only just, when they considered the amount of feathered game artificially reared on some estates every year, to make some provision for those exceptional conditions. In conclusion he would remind the House that the Agricultural Holdings Act had been in operation some time and in its operation had disclosed some weak points, and that if this Bill went too far in some respects it at any rate strengthened some of the weaknesses which, in the light of experience, had been found to exist in the Agricultural Holdings Act. That was, in his opinion, one of the many advantages of this Bill, and he sincerely hoped hon. Members opposite would not give an indiscriminate opposition to it, as more moderate proposals he could not conceive.

*MR. LAURENCE HARDY (Kent, Ashford) said the proposals in this Bill had been brought before the House on many occasions. If it was not identical with the Bill which was introduced by the hon. Member for South Molton it at any rate embraced the same principles. Those principles had already been considered in the Bills from time to time brought before the House, and they were not now recommended by any of the large agricultural societies in the country. It seemed to him rather remarkable that while this House declined to interfere in any sense with the various industries for which they legislated they had always insisted in interfering where the agricultural interest was concerned. It was said that this was a mild Bill, but he well remembered the remark of Lord Burghclere in this House, when President of the Board of Agriculture, that although this Bill did not include land courts, tenant right, and fixity of tenure, it contained a mild flirtation with them. Apparently in 1885 the Liberal Party was rather fond of using these terminological exactitudes — not inexactitudes—in this case. He believed Conservatives applied a stronger term, but there was no doubt whatever that within this Bill were contained all those principles which were inherently connected with the Irish land system; and surely if they were asked to-day to embark upon an imitation of the land system in Ireland it was well for them to consider whether they should not take a short cut in connection with this matter rather than follow the dreary round which had been connected with the agrarian system in Ireland. It would inevitably lead to that dual ownership which they had first established and then endeavoured to get rid of in Ireland. Surely it was not necessary with that example before them to take that line. It would be more advisable if they desired that there should be this security of tenure to the agricultural cultivator to take some measure for land purchase at once rather than go through the rounds of dual ownership. So far as the wider question in connection with the Bill was concerned, they ought to hesitate before embarking upon an imitation of the Irish land system, and they ought to hestitate for another reason. At this moment when they were seeking how to make the small holding system a more permanent part of our agricultural system it was extremely unwise for them to introduce another owner of land—another person who would be really an impediment in the direction they desired, because the moment they encouraged and gave power to the tenant to take upon himself improvements which had been considered up to now to be the province of the landlord, they made it more difficult to disestablish the tenant, more expensive to establish the small holder, and in every way they would encumber the incoming tenant, whether large or small, and make it more difficult to establish the very system which all were united in saying was desirable in connection with the reformation of the land system. Referring to the provisions of the Bill itself, he noticed that the clause in the original Bill of the hon. Member for the South Molton division of Devonshire in connection with the deterioration of the holding, as well as the improvement of the holding, seemed to have disappeared altogether. He admitted it was never a sufficient clause, but it showed on the face of the Bill that there should be fair play on both sides. He also noticed that although the mover and seconder said they desired to give to the tenant only that which was his property, there was an absence of words which used to refer to the inherent capabilities of the soil. There had been many discussions on that point, but he had never been able to understand how hon. Members could say that the inherent capabilities of the soil could belong to the tenant. At all events the clause was omitted from this particular Bill, and by the omission it was intended to imply, he presumed, that the inherent capabilities of the soil belonged to the tenant. With reference to the question of arbitration, there had never been, he believed, the slightest hostility on either side of the House to the principle under certain circumstances, but in this Bill there was a proposal to set up an entirely new form of arbitration, and one which went a great deal further than the form of arbitration which existed in Ireland. Clause 5 placed an entirely new duty upon the arbitrator. He was to be made not only a judge of fact but a judge of opinion as well, because he was to decide whether a thing was reasonable or unreasonable. An ordinary valuer who was a great expert on agriculture might be a very unsuitable person to decide a difficult legal question as to what was reasonable or unreasonable. Neither the mover nor the seconder of the Bill had given a satisfactory definition of what reasonable or unreasonable might be. He would give a concrete case. He bought a property in the south of England, and when he entered upon it he found the land which was naturally the park round the house let to five or six different occupiers. It was necessary that any person occupying the house should resume possession of the field within the precincts of the house. Was it reasonable or unreasonable that a person entering upon his purchase should occupy the park round his house? This and other similar questions would arise, and an arbitrator who had been appointed because of his knowledge of facts might have no legal training whatever to enable him to decide questions of opinion. With reference to the clause as to game, whereas he fully admitted that owing to the great increase of winged game a new condition of things might come before them which was not contemplated a few years ago, he desired to point out the extreme difficulty of laying down a principle as to compensation for injury by winged game. Two cases had been recently brought to his notice in which complaints were made of damage done by pheasants coming out of a wood upon tenants' green crops adjoining the cover. Inquiry showed the real fact to be that great flocks of pigeons, which were extremely changeable in their habits, had demolished certain fields of green and then gone their way, and the only culprits that could be found to lay the blame upon were a very few pheasants in the neighbouring cover which had probably done no harm whatever. By the time a compensation claim could be brought under review in a case of that sort it would be impossible for the landlord to produce any evidence, and he might therefore be unjustly treated. In regard to the law of distress, he was really astonished that hon. Members should bring up this old question again, because he should have thought that if anything had been proved by evidence it was that the law of distress as it stood was an actual protection to the tenant farmer, and especially to the small holder, and that there was practically no demand whatever for protection on the part of tenant occupiers of this country for the revision of the law. They knew the law as it stood gave them considerable protection, and it was an advantage to the tenants which they did not desire to get rid of. With reference to Clause 7, he was quite sure that so far as permanent pasture was concerned, the division proposed in the Act was the right one. It might be different in the West of England—and he might add that the pressure upon this Bill had come from that particular district—but if they looked at other parts of the country they would find that where permanent pasture had proved successful it was because it had been done with the sanction of the landlord who himself gave the seeds. In places where they found that permanent pasture had been undertaken by the tenant it was generally owing to the fact that the tenant for lack of capital had been unable to carry his farm on in other ways or else in a manner which was not at all satisfactory to the community or to the incoming tenant. With reference to Section 2, it seemed to imply that repairing was one of the things to be transferred. He wished to point out that the word "repair" did not occur in the Agricultural Holdings Act, and he should very much like to know what this proposal really meant. The erection or alteration of these matters was a landlord's improvement, but the ordinary repairs were what the tenant always undertook to do, and therefore it was not a question which need give them any great amount of anxiety. He thought it was desirable that they should be exact in their definition. With reference to the further clauses in the Bill he was rather surprised that the promoters had lightly brought before the House, almost without a word of explanation, a very large alteration in the law in reference to orchards and vegetables, while there was not a single reference to these questions made by the Committee on the fruit industry last autumn. That Committee reported at length and dealt especially with the matters included in this Bill. In merely proposing to transfer these things the promoters could not have considered the very careful Report to which he alluded. That Committee saw the difficulties, and he would advise the supporters of this Bill to study the evidence given before that Committee, and adapt their proposals upon the lines suggested in their Report, which, he might add, found favour from those connected with the fruit and vegetable industries because it was founded upon facts brought before them. Then there was the clause providing for a record. He had never objected to this record, but if they were bringing this proposal forward with the idea of cheapening procedure in connection with agricultural holdings no greater mistake could possibly be made. A record of this kind had been one of the most difficult and expensive things, and until they knew a little more clearly how it could be carried out, and on what occasions it was to be used, he confessed that to ask for such a thing, and then put in that the cost was to be borne by the landlord, was entering upon an expensive proceeding and a course which would be quite unjustifiable. He did not think that this Bill had behind it the authority of those engaged in agriculture. If he thought it would in any way improve the position of the agricultural classes he would be the last to oppose it. He desired that every means in their power should be taken to encourage agriculture, and that every person connected with the land should have the full advantage of that which he put into it. But like other industries all who entered upon it should be prepared to lose something of that which they put into it. He did not agree with the seconder of this Bill that they should start in the reverse way to that which was usually done. If an industry was to be carried on successfully it generally meant that the starter of the industry must have the profit to encourage him to continue it. The hon. Member placed the labourer first, the tenant second, and the landlord third. He wished to point out that unless the landlord could carry on neither of the other two could carry on at all. Unless it could be carried on profitably the farms would not be so well farmed and would not provide an abundance of labour for the labourers. The result of interfering in this matter would be to discourage the present system of agriculture, to encourage landlords to take their farms in hand themselves, and by that means put out the tenant farmer altogether. He did not think that was a policy which they would find popular. If they said that agricultural land was to be laid down in permanent pasture he was sure such a proposal would not be popular with the agricultural labourer. Whilst willing to accord the agricultural tenant every advantage which he could rightly claim, and believing that this matter was thoroughly discussed and these very remedies rejected when the matter was considered on the last occasion upon the Agricultural Holdings Bill; believing also that they had arrived at the proper principle, namely, that temporary improvements should be for the tenant to decide, and permanent improvements for the landlord to decide, he could not welcome a measure which interfered with the present method, and which proposed by a side wind a system which had not been successful in the sister island, and which inevitably, in his opinion, would take away the interest of those now mainly connected with the cultivation of the soil and the encouragement of capital in it. Therefore, he was very glad to support the Amendment which had been so ably moved and seconded from the Opposition Benches.

*MR. BENNETT (Oxfordshire, Woodstock) said that he felt some regret that the first Bill introduced for the benefit of agriculture by a Liberal Member in the new House of Commons should not have been cast in in a somewhat stronger and more vigorous mould than the measure before them—a measure which in some respects was actually of a less progressive and democratic character than a former Land Tenure Bill, introduced by the hon.

Member for South Molton, and passed through the House under the late Conservative Government. Of course, it might be said that they must take what they could get and be content with comparatively small mercies. Still, if this sort of luke-warm reform was a sample of what they intended to give the farmers of the country, the sooner land reformers realised this the better. But he hoped that brighter prospects were in store for them, and that disillusionment would not figure too prominently in the experience of Radical enthusiasts in this House. For the three last years Liberals had been telling the farmers of England that while they admitted the existence of agricultural depression in England they refused to admit that protection would provide any cure for it, and they were right in this contention. The Liberals, by their policy and their success at the polls, had saved agriculturists from the specious remedies prescribed by the tariff reformers. But as Liberals, and Labour Members also, quite as forcibly, realised, much more was needed for the cure of social evils than a merely negative and quiescent policy of abstention from protection and retention of free trade. This was emphatically true also in the case of agriculture. What was needed there, as elsewhere, was drastic and courageous reform. The real cause of agricultural depression in England was not free imports but our atrocious land system. As long as our land laws continued, as long as they demanded from the soil three profits, for the landlord, the farmer, and the labourer, so long he was convinced would our agriculturists always be handicapped in their endeavour to compete successfully with the farmers of other countries, who not only tilled the soil but owned it also. Upon all those who knew the conditions under which farming was carried on in a country like Denmark the conviction was forced more strongly every day that ownership was the golden secret of agricultural success. Meanwhile, however, until some system of land purchase, or—a more distant dream, he feared—land nationalisation became a *fait accompli* in England they must do the best they could for the farmer under present conditions. In his opinion farmers ought to have fair rents, fixed judicially by a rent court, absolutely free sale and freedom of cultivation, adequate compensation for improvements and for damage inflicted by game, and complete security of tenure. He ventured to think that these and similar demands, equally justifiable, were not satisfactorily met by the provisions of the Bill before them. At the very basis of all agricultural reform stood the necessity of securing an official record of all holdings giving the state of cultivation, the fertility, the number and character of the buildings and other permanent works upon the farm, and so on. A stipulation with respect to such a record was made in the present Bill, and a right welcome provision it was, for he took for granted that it was compulsory upon the landlord to procure such a record and that the record would be made by a Government official. Such a measure would prevent the oppressive claims for dilapidation which were now sometimes made upon farmers by landlords. On the other hand, he ventured to point out one or two obvious defects in the Bill. Land reformers had persistently urged that adequate compensation for continuous good farming should be assigned to the farmer. Well, it was true, that, in the first section of the Bill, compensation for improvements was so assigned. But on what terms? The compensation was determined by the letting value to the incoming tenant. He maintained that this ought not to form the criterion with respect to such compensation. The letting value of a farm depended on all sorts of contingencies—on the popularity of farming, or of a particular neighbourhood at the moment, the law of supply and demand and so forth. Moreover, as the stress of increased foreign competition might quite possibly lower still further the prices of agricultural produce, and rent tended to rise or fall *pari passu* with prices; it was clear that this shifting factor—the letting value of a farm—ought not to determine the amount of compensation. If a farmer had actually improved the fertility of a holding by his outlay, then, quite independently of the letting value to a succeeding tenant, he was entitled to adequate compensation. In Section 2 of the Bill, while compensation was assigned for damage inflicted upon crops by pheasants, partridges, grouse and black game—a long needed and most welcome reform—no notice was taken of the frightful losses often incurred by farmers through the depredations of rabbits. It was childish to say that the tenant farmer had the remedy in his own hands, as he was entitled to shoot them; it was not everybody who could shoot rabbits with accuracy and dispatch, or secure others to do the job for him. And, as a matter of fact, in many cases fields were devastated by hundreds of rabbits which sallied forth on their mischievous raids from coverts, over which the unfortunate farmer had no control. He had seen a field of young corn completely ruined in this way—a sight to make angels—agricultural angels, if such existed—weep tears of pity. Evidence on this point was supplied *ad nauseam* in the report of the Welsh Land Commission.

> "I have made application," said one tenant farmer, "and I am told that the landlord could do nothing, as I was allowed to kill the rabbits. We kill all we can on the farm; but we are so close to the preserves that if we clear them this week, next week they would be as numerous as ever."

The fact was that the time had almost come when the Ground Game Act should be extended to winged game. The tendency of landowners nowadays in many parts of England was to preserve more and more game, and in many cases the preservation of game was really fatal to high-class farming, and was sometimes—more especially in Wales and East Anglia—a potent factor in agricultural depression. If evidence was needed he could take the inquirer to some allotment holders on a Midland estate which he knew, and the poor villagers would tell them why they found their allotments practically useless to them. Or on a bigger scale one might peruse the evidence of the Welsh Land Commission Report—evidence cumulative and irresistible, which proved his contention up to the hilt. Here was one case taken at random—

> "We suffer terribly from game in our part, and destruction from rabbits, for which we get no compensation whatever. I have had over three acres of my corn completely destroyed this year. . . . In one field we sowed thirty-three bushels of barley and cut nine. We always have to sow an extra quantity of seed to make allowance for the pheasants."

Finally, he would like to say a word as to Section 5. He should have preferred to see the vague term "unreasonably" more exactly defined, and to know for certain who was to judge of the "sweet reasonableness" of a landlord's pretext for eviction. The words "for no other reason than bad farming," would perhaps cover the necessary ground, but in any case he should like to feel sure that no British farmer should henceforth be liable to eviction from his farm on the ground of his political or religious beliefs. They must protect their farmers against petty, feudal tyrants in the rural districts. To omit the famous case of a well-known Shropshire farmer, he would just recall to the memory of hon. Members the more recent case of a farmer called Perrin in Wiltshire who was evicted from his farm for no other reason than that he had seen fit to leave the Anglican Church and become a Baptist. The present Bill—rather a *ridiculus mus* of a Bill, as the outcome of so much land reforming effort and enthusiasm—was of some value as a peg upon which to hang discussion, and so he should give it his support; but unless it were radically amended in Committee it would be of comparatively slight utility as a contribution to the land question. He looked forward, however, with confidence to a much more progressive and democratic Bill from the Government. The Prime Minister had raised the hopes of all true land reformers by his splendid phrase "less of a pleasure ground for the wealthy, more of a treasure house for the nation," and he trusted that when the time came the Government would justify their earnest expectations.

*MR. NICHOLLS (Northamptonshire, N.) said that he felt naturally moved to say a few words on this most interesting topic, coming as he did from the ranks of the agricultural labourers. This was a question which most surely affected the agricultural labourers. It had been said by an hon. Gentleman that one reason why labourers left the land and went into the towns was that much of the land had been put down in permanent pasture; but the migration from the villages to the towns was not new. For 200 years the thing had been going on. Sixty years ago and more, the demand for workmen for the construction of railways, particularly at the time when agricultural wages were low, was a strong inducement to bring the labourers from the country into the cities. These men afterwards engaged in other employments, and no doubt added to the over-crowding in the towns which had led to the cry of "back to the land." He himself came from a village, then drifted into the ranks as a navvy, and afterwards tramped the country. What he wanted to say was that they would never get the best type of men back to the land until some inducement was offered them. They never would get those back to the land who had once got their foot free and tasted the free atmosphere of the towns; that was to say, if only the offer of employment as labourers for another man was made to them. From a workman's point of view tenure was everything. Until they could make a man feel, when he went from the town back to the land, that he could rent a holding of his own, with security of tenure, they would never get the best out of the land or the best men back to the land. He could give case after case where the tenure of a cottage or a small holding depended on a man's religion or politics, or on being tied to the tail of the landlord's agent. Until they could give a man a footing on his holding, absolutely free of any question of politics or religion, they could never induce any man to go back to his village, which, after all, he loved. Men who had been brought up in their early days on the land and in rural villages loved them still, but they would not return as day labourers merely. They would use the money which they had saved to take up a small holding, if they were secure from disturbance and were free to go to chapel or political meeting without being run down by the landlord's agent. That was the solution of the problem for the best men; the "undesirables" could be dealt with afterwards. There ought surely to be no doubt whatever in the minds of hon. Members on either side of the House in regard to the questions of game and freedom of cropping. From a labourer's and small tenant farmer's point of view these questions ought to be dealt with at once. This Bill did not go far enough; but it was a step in the right direction, and he would give it his warmest support.

SIR EDWARD STRACHEY (Somersetshire, S.) said that in the two previous interesting speeches it had been said that the Bill did not go far enough; but the point to be considered now was what were the merits of this particular Bill. The noble Lord who moved the Amendment based his objection not so much to the principle of the Bill—for he, like the majority of the Members of the House, was willing to admit that ample compensation should be given for improvements which made for good husbandry—but because he believed the Bill would give certain rights to tenant farmers which would lead to what is known in Ireland as dual ownership. Speaking on behalf of the Board of Agriculture, he could say that they did not regard the Bill in that light. He did not consider that there was a new and dangerous innovation in the principle of the Bill; on the contrary, they thought the principle was right, and had every sympathy with it. Of course, as regarded the details of the Bill the Government desired to keep a free hand. Speaking for himself, he had examined the Bill in regard to its details in the interests of both the tenant and the landlord, and what was of much greater importance, in the interests of good agriculture and of the country as a whole. The noble Lord had objected to Clause 4, which abolished the right of the landlord to penalise the tenant for departing from the provisions of his contract of tenancy as regarded cropping and selling the produce of the farm. But he would remind the House that the late Government had passed the Agricultural Holdings Act of 1900, which contained a special provision that made it impossible for a landlord in the future, except for breaking up permanent pasture, to penalise the tenant for breaking any agreement as to cropping or selling produce unless the landlord could show that the farm had been deteriorated. The late Government had, therefore, accepted the principle that so long as a tenant did nothing opposed to good husbandry, or did not reduce the fertility of the soil, the landlord should not have any right to exact a penal rent for a breach of the provisions of the contract of tenancy. This Bill only went a little farther in that direction, and said that the tenant should have full power to crop, to sell produce, and, in fact, to make the best of the land.

At the same time, it was necessary to regard this clause very carefully, because he thought the tenant should not be allowed to remove the manure made on the farm from the holding, or to sell off the holding the whole of the hay crop during the last year of the tenancy. Such restrictions were necessary in the interest not so much of the landlord as of the incoming tenant. He had heard, at the Central Chamber of Agriculture, farmer after farmer, in discussing the Agricultural Holdings Act, say that the incoming tenant's interest should be considered as well as that of the out-going tenant. Then, there was the question referred to by the noble Lord of dual ownership of the land—an anticipation which seemed to have frightened him more than any other clause in the Bill. The noble Lord said that if Clause 7 were passed it would take away from the landlord any interest he had in his land and would create a class of absentee landlords. The noble Lord thought it was a clause which would result in making many owners absentee landlords. Farms that were most out of condition and where the buildings were most out of repair were found on those estates on which the landlords did not reside or which they very rarely saw. He himself thought, as a matter of fact, that this clause was likely to induce landlords to reside on these estates and to look after the roads, bridges, water courses, and buildings on their property as a good landlord should. The hon. Member for the Ashford Division of Kent referred to the question of repairing buildings, and he seemed to think that the landlord did not do the repairs of roofs, walls, and floors. He could say that in the West of England the landlord did all these repairs, and it would only be right to allow the tenant to do them if a landlord refused or neglected to do them. In regard to permanent pasture, that was a difficult question, and when Clause 7 came to be considered in Committee it would require to be carefully dealt with. There were many cases where it would be wrong for the landlord to refuse to allow the tenant to lay down permanent pasture. On the other hand, there were cases where tenants might lay down permanent pasture against the landlord's wish, with the result that in five, six or seven years the holding might be far from benefited, though the tenant had received compensation at the end of the first three years for what then seemed an improvement. But that was no hindrance to the acceptance of the general principle that where land was suitable for the laying down of permanent pasture, thereby improving the holding and enabling the tenant to get a larger return for his capital, it should be admitted. There was another point in regard to orchards. Personally he was ready to encourage the planting of orchards. His experience had been, however, that it was not always easy to find out without experiment what was the most suitable soil, the most suitable aspect, and the most suitable trees to plant. When experiments were made in planting apple trees it was impossible to tell for ten or fifteen years how they were going to succeed. Therefore, some provisions should be inserted in this clause not only to protect the interests of the landlord but those of the incoming tenant. As to deterioration by the tenant, he held that in the interests of the country they ought to make it equally difficult for the tenant to escape from the consequences of his neglect, and if the holding was deteriorated he ought to be made to pay for the damage. His own experience was that no one was more anxious than the tenant farmer that there should be good farming, and that if a tenant farmed badly he should be made to pay for it. And for this very good reason: it was the interest of the tenant farmer to go into a well cultivated farm, because the compensation paid to the incoming tenant never paid him for the worry and loss he had to undergo for the bad farming of his predecessor. Then the hon. Member for the Ashford Division of Kent said that they were all in favour of small holdings but that this measure was an impediment to the creation of small holders because it gave compensation for disturbance. He himself was very anxious to see small holdings, but, at the same time, he was not anxious to see them created to the detriment of the present tenant farmers. He would not be a party to a scheme for the creation of small holdings which did not give fair compensation to the existing tenants of large farms when they were deprived, for that purpose, of their holdings. He had been rather surprised that the hon Member for the Ashford Division of Kent seemed to imply that the tenants in such a case ought not to be paid compensation if they gave up their large farms.

MR. LAURENCE HARDY said that what he had stated was that if dual ownership was established in this country, and if tenant right existed, there would be undoubtedly an impediment to starting the system of small holdings, because two owners would have to be treated with instead of one.

SIR EDWARD STRACHEY said the hon. Member's objection against compensation for disturbance because it might hinder small holdings was not a sufficient one. So far as he read this Bill he could not see how it was possible to introduce dual ownership into it. There was no provision in the Bill to prevent the landlord at any time resuming the occupation of his land. He was glad to notice that there was a general approval of the suggestion that there should be a record of the holding, not only in the interest of the landlord and of the tenant, but of good husband y. The only question was who was to bear the cost of it. That must be considered in Committee. Having dealt with the principle involved and the details of the Bill and the objections offered to them, he would conclude by saying that the Board of Agriculture assented to the Second Reading of the Bill, reserving to the Department the right to move Amendments of their own at a later stage, not so much in the interests of either the landlords or the tenants, but in the interests of good husbandry and of the country as a whole.

*MR. J. F. MASON (Windsor) said that without dealing with the question of principle involved in the Bill, such as dual ownership of land and the interference with the right of contract, and without going into many of the objections with which it seemed to him the Bill bristled, such as those contained in Sections 4 and 5, he should like to concentrate his remarks upon one point which appeared to threaten the interests not only of landlords or tenants but of the community at large. The hon. Member for the Tewkesbury Division of Gloucestershire referred to the fact that the words "On quitting his holding," which were in the Bill of 1900, were omitted from this Bill. He would like to suggest that in the case of yearly tenancies the result would be that the compensation for alterations which had been hitherto landlord's alterations, but which would now be done by the tenant, would become due at the end of the year —that was to say, almost immediately after the expenditure had been incurred. It meant that the tenant would be empowered to carry out landlord's alterations at the landlord's expense, but without consulting the landlord or allowing the landlord in any way to control the amount of money expended. The scope of these alterations was set forth in Section 7, and included repairs, the laying down of land to permanent pasture, which meant reducing the amount of labour necessary on the farm; the planting of orchards, fruit trees, and strawberry beds. All these alterations involved very large sums of money, and would amount in many cases to the equivalent of several pounds sterling per acre. Allowing that the tenant was actuated by perfectly good faith, they had to allow for the possibility that he might commit an error of judgment. If the landlord had to re-let the farm he would not be able to recoup himself for the amount of money he had had to pay the previous tenant for the so-called improvements. The point of his argument was that the liabitity which the landlord was called upon to incur in such a case amounted to several pounds per acre. Where the land was poor land and let at a low rental, would there be enough income to the landlord in the form of rent to provide an insurance fund against the liability he was called upon to incur? In many cases it would be better for the landlord in order to escape this liability to allow the land to go out of cultivation altogether, which would be against the interests of the whole community. In his opinion, the passing of this Bill would inevitably result in a gradual concentration of the good land into the hands of the wealthy landowners and the gradual diminution of the number of tenant farmers who would remain upon the land. It would bring about a gradual throwing out of cultivation of poor land, which was now let at a low rental, but was still able to provide a living to the tenant farmer, but which land did not produce enough rent to make it profitable to let, subject to the liabilities which would be created by this Bill.

*MR. WINFREY (Norfolk, S.W.) said the desire for this Bill was not confined to the west country, for he could say with some knowledge of the eastern counties that they would certainly like such a Bill. Those who knew anything about agricultural districts would recognise that tenants must have further security if they were to cultivate the soil to greater advantage. This Bill was distinctly good so far as it went, and if he had any criticism to offer at all it was that it did not go far enough. He very much welcomed the clause dealing with game preserving, and here the Bill certainly did not go far enough. It had been suggested that the Ground Game Act should be extended to winged game, and he would ask, Why not? If the House would recognise that the land should be made to produce the most quantity of food for the people, then he thought the House would have to abolish the game laws altogether. Thousands of acres in the Eastern counties had gone out of cultivation altogether, because sport had been put first, and, as wealth accumulated, this was increasingly the case. He was not against sport in its proper place, but he said it ought not to be put first. There was excessive game preserving in the Eastern counties, and especially in the constituency he represented, which was probably the largest game preserving area in the country. In his constituency huge game preserves were let to wealthy strangers—City men and others—who had no interest whatever in the tenant farmers of the district. They took shooting rights for a period of years, and the game was artificially increased, and it was a heart-breaking job for the farmers who farmed those estates. He ventured, the other day, to ask two tenants on Lord Walsingham's estate in Norfolk as to their opinion of this Bill, and one said that he had this year sowed twenty acres of sainfoin, and now when it should be beginning to show up green, it was like a desert. The crowns were all picked out. It was the cock pheasants that did most of the damage—

> "When I say anything," the farmer added, "they say 'Oh, it's the pigeons.' I know there are some pigeons about, but they don't do much damage because I won't let them. I soon shoot them, but the pheasants I mustn't shoot. I hope Parliament will do something for us, but generally Parliament gives us the power, and then puts in something which takes it away again. The remedy must be simple and one that will work."

The other farmer said—

> "I have one field of twelve acres sowed with wheat and the pheasants have taken all the seed. I have sent in a claim for seed and labour, but that will not recompense me, because my whole farming arrangements are upset."

He was over this particular district a good deal in January and saw pheasants as tame as barn-door fowls. He came across another farmer who had since written to him. He said—

> "If I may be allowed to approach you upon one question which greatly affects us as farmers in this district, I shall deem it a favour—I mean the cursed game question. Undoubtedly you are aware of the craze in this neighbourhood for rearing game, the result of which has been the disappearance of shepherds who contributed largely to the wealth of this country. At present, gentlemen in velvet coats carrying double-barrelled guns are driving the farmers and labourers off the land. I will give you a few facts. My father rented a farm in this parish. We found it impossible to farm against the game. Our landlord was approached some eight years ago, and decided to give us our shooting, which we were allowed to retain until this last year. Sir John Kelk rents the shooting on an adjoining estate, and although having some 17,000 or 18,000 acres to shoot over, was not satisfied until he obtained possession of our little ewe lamb, from the loss of which, I, as manager for my mother, have been obliged to dismiss two labourers. If you can in any way break the neck of this kind of thing the agriculturists will have much to thank you for."

Hon. Gentleman on the Opposition side said that Liberals in this matter did not represent the agricultural interest, but there were only two agricultural Members representing the Eastern counties on the Opposition side, and what the farmers had said to Liberals was, "Well, the Tory Party have been in office for ten years, and all I can say is you can't do much worse." One hon. Gentleman on the Opposition side asked what had become of the yeomen farmers. They had been turned out in scores of instances to make room for game estates, bailiffs being put on to the farms. He would give a case in point of where what ought to be the treasure house of the nation had been turned into the pleasure ground of the rich. He would mention the parish of Foulden, on the estate of Lord Amherst of Hackney. An old man there, ninety-one years of age, could remember when there were twenty small owners—yeomen farmers. To-day there was not one yeoman farmer left.

AN HON. MEMBER: What about the price of corn?

*MR. WINFREY said it was not a question of the price of corn, but of game preserving. These little owners had been bought up at a price, but it was to the disadvantage of the country. Another reason why they were bought out was because there were 102 acres of common land, and these twenty small owners had common rights, and could turn out two heads of stock for each right, and had the power of cutting turf for fuel in May, and litter in October. The object of buying up these small owners was to have a huge game preserving and sporting estate, and the little parish and its twenty owners interfered with the better pleasure of a few rich men. The question must be faced that they could not permit the rural districts to be devastated in the way they were being devastated. He hoped when the Bill got into Committee some of its provisions would be considerably strengthened. With regard to Clause 7, he did not think it was advisable to give the tenant the power to plant top fruit without the sanction of the landowner, because a tenant might in that way double the capital value of the land, and he did not think that would be reasonable. Those who wanted to go in for orchard planting or top fruit should do it upon freeholds or upon long leaseholds, or better still, upon the land of the nation. How were they going to get over the difficulty, which did not appear to be provided for in this Bill, of improving the letting value of copyhold land, which was a distinct grievance in the Eastern counties, where there was a great deal of such land? If a tenant materially increased the letting value of copyhold land, when the property changed hands the lord of the manor got a great deal more than he otherwise would. Then he would like to deal with the landlord who sold privately over the heads of his tenants. This was especially a grievance where land was good and agriculture was a success, and tenants ought certainly to have some greater protection in this respect than they had at present.

LORD WILLOUGHBY DE ERESBY (Lincolnshire, Horncastle) said that Members on the Opposition side of the House had listened with very great pleasure to the speech of the representative of the Board of Agriculture. All of them congratulated him on the grasp of the subject he had shown, and, if he might be permitted to say so, the hon. Gentleman differed from him as regarded this Bill to a very small extent. The hon. Gentleman seemed to think that the Bill would be better given a Second Reading and then sent to Committee, where it should receive considerable amendment. The hon. Gentleman then proceeded to go through almost every clause of the Bill to show how it would, in his opinion, require amending. He entirely agreed on that matter, but differed in the sense that he did not think the Bill was worth giving a Second Reading. As he thought, the hon. Gentleman had shown that there were several provisions which no doubt did not do much one way or the other, but that there were several provisions which were distinctly mischievous, and would require considerable alteration in Committee. In order to make his position on this Bill absolutely clear he might say that he had repeated time after time that there was nobody more anxious than himself that any tenant who had improved his farm should receive ample compensation for what he had put in the land. He considered that that was a doctrine which had always been accepted by anybody who knew anything about the agricultural situation. But what he did hold was that at the present moment, under the existing laws, with perhaps very few exceptions, the tenant farmer received all the compensation he was entitled to. When any one could show him on good evidence that there were a large number of tenants in this country who could be turned out of their farms or quit them without receiving ample compensation, he would be the very first to vote that these people should receive compensation. At the present time, when the price of corn was low and the price of feeding-stuff high, there had no doubt sprung up a custom among tenant farmers to consume their corn on their holdings, and they were quite right in doing so; but before the passing of the Agricultural Holdings Act there was no claim for compensation, and they extended the provisions of the Bill, and now the farmer could get compensation for the corn consumed on the holding. In respect of this he wished that the outgoing tenant should receive compensation for his improvements. A large number of tenants every year in this country left their farms and got ample compensation for money they had spent on those farms. He had considerable experience in agriculture, not only as a landlord but also as a tenant. He had taken over a good many farms, and his experience was that the compensation he had had to pay in taking those farms had always been in his opinion considerably more than he ought to have paid. Personally he believed that under the existing law in a large number of cases it was the incoming tenant who had to pay more than he ought to the outgoing tenant for improvements. The proposals that the tenant might on determination of the tenancy claim compensation for the agricultural value of the holding opened up a very large question. He was perfectly prepared to admit, in spite of what he had already said, that there might be cases where a tenant by continuous good farming improved the condition of his holding, and on leaving the holding was entitled to more compensation than he received. It had been urged that there should be compensation for a farmer for continuous good farming. Whenever a landlord tried to let his land he tried to get a tenant who would put in continuous good farming. A great many cases had been quoted in which tenants had come into farms, improved the land considerably, and then the landlords had given them notice to quit unless they consented to pay higher rents. It they went closer into such cases they would often find that the landlord had agreed with the incoming tenant to let the farm at practically a nominal rent because the outgoing tenant had left it in a disgraceful state, and it would take time, money, and labour to bring it round. Where such a bargain was come to between landlord and tenant under present conditions the tenant could easily protect himself. In the first place he could say, "I consider this farm would take three or four years to pull it round, and if I take it I should require a lease for fourteen years, so that I should be able in the last five or six years of my tenancy to reap some of the fruits of the capital and labour I have put into it." In a great number of cases which were quoted as showing hardship it would be found that the landlord had let the land at an exceptionally low rent, taking the fact into consideration that it was not in a good state of cultivation. With regard to the question of whether the landlord's consent should be required for certain improvements, the hon. Member for South-West Norfolk had found fault with that provision which allowed the planting of fruit trees. It would be perfectly intolerable to allow tenants without any consent of the landlord to plant whatever fruit trees they liked on their land. He believed that if they wanted to get the people back to the land it would be better to keep the land under the plough than to put it under permanent pasture. He did not see the point in the clause dealing with repairs to holdings, because, at the present moment, when a landlord let a farm one of the conditions was that the tenant should keep the place in repair, which he frequently did not. Speaking for himself, he would not make any fuss when a tenant came to him and asked permission to do the repairs; he would be only too delighted to allow him to do them. With regard to the question of game, he did not see the justice of the claim for compensation for damage done by winged game. There were hundreds of estates where the landlord did not preserve a single pheasant or any other of the winged creatures that might be considered pests on the land. In a case like that a tenant whose crops were damaged by game would claim the value of such damage, although the landlord preserved no game himself. In his opinion that was a point which would not stand debating for one moment. With regard to the farmer having the right to have shooting parties, he thought this was a dangerous provision, because it gave the farmer an inducement to keep rabbits upon his farm. One of the great grievances the landlord had to endeavour to remedy was where a farmer insisted upon keeping his farm full of rabbits, which, having eaten up the whole of one farmer's land, went upon the farm of his neighbour and ate up that. If this clause were allowed to pass it would result in a farmer keeping his farm full of rabbits, and so making himself a nuisance to his neighbours. He was perfectly willing that the outgoing tenant should receive full compensation for everything he put into the land, but he would like to ask whether they were not by this Bill taking away the property of one man and giving it to another. He considered that some of the provisions of the Bill took away the rights of the landlord and gave them to the tenant. There were a large number of cases where the tenant was far richer than his landlord, and it would be manifestly unjust to give away the property of the landlord to the tenant. They should not legislate always to benefit one class, and if there was anything to be done in the way of altering our system of land tenure it was not to be done by impoverishing one class and benefiting another. If it was to be done at all it should be done by a system of land purchase, as in Ireland. He knew that some hon. Members went further and argued that the land belonged to neither the landlord nor the tenant, but to the State, and advocated confiscation. He did not agree, but he admitted that there was some soundness and common-sense even in that view, and that there might be something to be said for it; but there was neither common-sense nor anything else in this House saying to one class of people, We are going to take something away from you and give it to some one else. He implored the House not to make the question of land purchase more difficult by anything they now did. If they proceeded to put the tenant farmer into a stronger position by strengthening his fixity of tenure, if he was to have large compensation the moment he gave up ten acres of land for the purposes of allotments, then there would be great difficulty in acquiring land for that purpose. What they really desired to see was the people back upon the land and the land bearing good fruit and being of good use to the country, but he warned the House that that would not be accomplished by permitting them to engage in any wild scheme of cultivation which they chose. Of course he knew that there were many clever men in this country who cultivated the land well although they did "cross crops," but those men were well known and could always obtain permission to farm in any way they chose; but it would never do to allow everyone to farm as they chose, because then they would have no control over those people who were known as wreckers, people who took a farm for three or four years and took everything out of the land and then left it derelict and useless.

Mr. J. EMMOTT BARLOW (Somersetshire, Frome) said that the measure was a moderate one, and he hoped the House would pass the Second Reading by a large majority. He did not pretend to say that it would cure all the ills agriculture was suffering from at present. There were many things needed to put agriculture in a sound condition. The most important of these was to see that the tenants had adequate security for any capital they put into the land. The tenants did not think they had that security at the present time. There was no trace whatever of dual ownership in this Bill. The landlord could get possession of his land again under reasonable terms—that he had to pay full compensation for the improvements that had been effected by the tenant. If the tenant made alterations which did not subsequently turn out to be improvements the landlord, in resuming possession, would not have to pay for such alterations. In this Bill they would not disturb or lessen the interest of the landlord in his holding, and if they did not do that their action would not tend to diminish the disposition of the landlord to put money in his holding, but they would increase the disposition of the tenant to put his money into it. Another point was that these improvements would provide work and wages in the country for the labouring classes. It was only by having the utmost disposition on the part of all those connected with the land to put money into its cultivation that they would be able to provide employment upon the land for a vast mass of the people of this country. He should be very sorry if he thought this Bill would do anything which would render more difficult the acquisition of small holdings, and he could not see it would do anything of the kind. There should be every inducement held out, not only to the landlord, but to the occupying tenant, to spend as much money as possible in the improvement of the land they occupied. On the ground that more labour would be employed on the soil, on the ground that landlords as a result of the tenant having greater security would get a better class of tenant, and on the ground that the land would yield more if justice was done to it, he thought it was the duty of the House to give the Bill a Second Reading. There might be some amendments or alterations to be made in Committee, because there were undoubtedly some points which would require careful looking into. If, however, they passed the Bill they would have done a good day's work for the country as a whole, and for the agricultural community in particular.

Lord TURNOUR (Sussex, Horsham) desired to refer to two points only with regard to the clause dealing with the ground game. It had been said that unless a tenant was able to shoot he had no means of keeping down the hares and rabbits upon the farm. Had hon. Members never heard of snares and traps? [An Hon. Member: Yes, they are illegal.] He ventured to point out it was perfectly possible for the farmers to keep down ground game under the present laws, and that there was no necessity for legislation in that regard. He was not a shooting man, but a hunting man, therefore he was no particular friend of either the pheasant or its rearer; but he nevertheless thought it would be very difficult to discriminate between the damage caused by crows and pigeons, who, so far as he knew, the farmers had never succeeded in keeping down, and that done by feathered game. Then there was a word or two to be said upon the clause dealing with improvements, in which there was a reference to the cultivation of asparagus and strawberries. In some portions of the country to endeavour to do that as a commercial speculation on an agricultural holding would end in ruin and disaster. Everybody knew that at the present time many Members of this House and others who had been badly bitten by the "back to the land" craze thought that it was only necessary to get a few acres of land and grow everything between kohlrabi and cauliflowers to make a fortune, but that was not the case. The clause also referred to the laying down of permanent pasture. He ventured to submit that if they allowed the tenants to lay down permanent pasture without the consent of the landlords, though that might possibly encourage the pheasant, it was very likely on the other hand to discourage the peasant, whose desire was not for permanent pasture, but for land that was under the plough. He did not believe this Bill would do anything to make easier the acquisition of small holdings to which he thought the speeches of hon. Members opposite would have been more properly addressed and would have been more relevant to this Bill. In his opinion the Amendment should be supported.

THE SECRETARY FOR SCOTLAND (Mr. SINCLAIR, Forfarshire) said that the Government supported the Second Reading, reserving their right to amend certain provisions in Committee, and they did so because a large majority of the Members of this House were in favour of making a distinct advance upon existing agricultural holdings legislation. This was a Bill which was justified, not only by the passing of the smaller measure five years ago, but also by the Resolution passed in 1893 which contained the principles to be found in this measure. Some amendments might be necessary in Committee; for instance, contracting out of the provisions of the Bill should be prohibited. A gratifying feature in the constitution of the new House was the evident intention among the agricultural community to look for relief and assistance for their industry in directions other than protection. The Party opposite had not distinguished themselves by agricultural legislation, and there was hope that under the changed conditions advance would be made in consonance with modern science and modern developments in security of tenure as practised in other countries, notably France, Germany, and Denmark. The main feature of the agricultural laws of those countries was that of security of tenure in their agricultural holdings. Without saying more he repeated his assurance that the Government assented to the Second Reading of this Bill and hoped the House would vote in its favour.

MR. WALTER LONG (Dublin, S.) was at a loss to understand what protection had to do with the Bill. He reminded the right hon. Gentleman that this Bill came from a private Member, and that the late Government carried a Bill for the amendment of the law as to tenants' improvements, and their claim to be friends to the farmer rested on a sounder foundation than that of the Party now in power. In this new Parliament they were told that many great changes were to be made and many ancient institutions were to be abandoned; there was certainly one which would soon fall into disuse and that was the practice of new Members claiming the indulgence of the House when addressing it for the first time. He ventured to say from what they had seen this afternoon and from the evidence they had given of their powers this session, new Members like those who had addressed them would require no assistance of that kind. He agreed with what had been said on the Ministerial side of the House, namely, that the Bill was a moderate one, but he had yet to learn that that in itself was to be regarded as a justification for its acceptance by the House, seeing that in view of some of them it was not calculated to effect the object which its promoters had in view. He acknowledged at once that the promoters—that the hon. Gentleman the Member for Bodmin and the other hon. Members whose names appeared on the back of the Bill—desired to aid agriculture, but he altogether joined issue with them, because he contended that they were not in reality aiding agriculture by the policy which the Bill advocated. He unfortunately did not hear the speech of the hon. Baronet who represented the Department of Agriculture in this House and to whom he offered his most sincere congratulations on the position in which he now found himself, neither did he hear some of the other speeches which had been made; but he did hear the speeches of the proposer and seconder and of some others, and he was bound to say that in the course of the debate he had not been able to gather one atom of evidence to show that the position of the tenant at the present time was so insecure as to need legislation of this kind. There was this remarkable fact to be borne in mind. The right hon. Gentleman the Secretary for Scotland had told them that in Denmark the main cause of the prosperity of the agriculturist was to be found in a security of tenure which was greater than the security which obtained in this country. But the remarkable fact connected with agriculture in England and Wales—it did not apply so much to Scotland he believed—was that the great mass of the tenant farmers in the course of the last thirty years had come to prefer infinitely a system of yearly tenancies to one of leases. If, therefore, the real difficulty in their way had been insecurity of tenure surely they would long ago have adopted a system of leases in preference to one of yearly tenancies, because it must be obvious there was greater security under leases than under yearly tenancies. He had known agriculturists from all parts of England and Wales, among them some of the largest and best farmers of the country, and he had often asked them whether they believed, at all events since the last amendment of the Agricultural Holdings Act, giving compensation for unexhausted improvements, that any need for a further strengthening of their position existed. They all knew perfectly well that agriculture had, during the last twenty-five years, been through a very severe period of depression imposing the greatest possible strain on both owner and occupier, and yet it was the fact, for which the country could not be too thankful, that on the great majority of the larger estates there were to be found to this day the same tenants, or their sons. A greater tribute to the existing system could not be found. He declared in the interests of the tenant farmers themselves that this Bill was not a desirable one. He would not go into the details, for they had been admirably discussed by hon. friends behind him, but he was going to ask the House to realise this fact: that hitherto there had been —wisely as he thought—a broad distinction drawn between those so-called improvements on farms which were of a temporary character, to the benefit of which the tenant ought to be entitled, and those improvements which were of a permanent character and which were the business and the property of the landlord. They were now proposing to give the tenant farmer permission to do that which he had not hitherto been allowed—to embark upon a particular kind of so-called improvement, and they were telling him he would be compensated for that. One of his hon. friends, in the course of the debate, suggested that that would probably lead a tenant farmer, not from any desire to defraud the landlord or to do anything improper, but through a desire to find some new method of cultivating his farm, to embark upon improvements involving great expense, entailing a great burden on the landlord, and yet producing bad results. Hon. Members interrupted his hon. friend with cries of "No, no," and when asked for the reason of their disclaimer pointed out that to get compensation the tenant must prove that he had made a real improvement. Such an interruption could not have come from men who had had practical experience of the working of this Act of Parliament, or who possessed practical knowledge of the business of agriculture, because it was exactly in the class of improvement contemplated by the Bill that the value could not be ascertained for several years. There were many agriculturists indeed who thought that the use of the word "improvements" was in itself dangerous and misleading, because when hon. Gentleman talked about these improvements for which there was to be compensation they had in reality in their minds a different word altogether. What they were going to do by this legislation was not to say to the tenant farmer, "If you carry out improvements on your farm, and if your expenditure and your industry leave your land better and more productive than you found it, then you shall be compensated." That was a just principle already recognised by law. But they were going to say to th tenant, "Here is power given you to make what you believe to be an improvement." In other words they were going to encourage him not necessarily to make improvements but to make experiments which might turn out to be no improvements at all but disasters instead. [Cries of "No."] Well, he had had practical experience of it. They were, he repeated, saying in this Bill, "You are entitled to make improvements which will be in reality experiments and you are to be compensated for them." Tenant farmers as a rule, were not very careful students of Acts of Parliament. They believed that the planting of fruit trees or the laying down of land for grass were things they could safely dc without the consent of the landlord. Take that simplest question of all, the laying down of permanent pastures. That was an improvement for which the consent of the landlord had always been required, because it was impossible for any man—for even the most intelligent and experienced agriculturist—to say, until the land had thus been laid down for five or even seven years, whether it was going to turn out a worthless experiment or a real improvement. Again, the cultivation of fruit trees was an experiment of which very little was known in this country at the present time. In order to render it successful it was needed that the land should be suitable and that the climatic conditions were such as to make that form of cultivation possible. A great deal of money had been expended in making fruit farms out of agricultural land in the East of England. The money was well spent and the land proved productive, but it was found that the climatic conditions that obtained after the fruit was gathered from the land were unsuitable for the proper marketing of the produce, and as a result the money spent on turning the land into fruit farms was entirely wasted. One of the greatest difficulties they had had for the last fifteen or twenty years had arisen from the fact that in districts where farming had proved most unsuccessful, causing the old tenants to give up their farms, new men had come in from another county, or even another country, had tried new methods, and had spent large sums of money, often with an equal lack of success. Now they were going to give such a tenant the power to carry out certain things for which in the past the consent of the landlord had been essential, and they were going to tell him that if he did them he would get compensation. If the tenant waited until the completion of the period which must elapse before the experiment could be properly tested there would be very little difficulty in deciding whether or not it was a success. But suppose he quitted before that stage was reached the point arose: was he to be compensated by the incoming tenant on the basis of success or of failure, or was he to be held midway between heaven and earth, awaiting the time when the success or otherwise of the experiment had been proved? Surely such an arrangement was calculated to do more harm than good to the tenant farmer. Something had been said about the advantages of a single arbitrator in cases of dispute between landlord and tenant. Did hon. Members who advocated that realise what actually took place? The single arbitrator was provided for already, but if his employment was not usual it was because landlord and tenant preferred, in cases of sharp disagreement, each to have his own valuer, and no Act of Parliament could prevent men in such a case from obtaining the best assistance and advice, and to talk about cheapening procedure and simplifying it by providing that there should be but one arbitrator was to propound a theory which, when reduced to practice, it would be found could not be enforced. There was one principle embodied in the Bill to which he took the strongest possible exception, and that was the principle of dual ownership, which was undoubtedly approached in the Bill. His noble friend who spoke earlier in the afternoon was absolutely correct when he suggested that this was one of the greatest difficulties which faced them in dealing with the Irish Land question. It was the fact that the tenants had erected buildings on their holdings and spent their own money on the land that caused an insuperable difficulty and led to the creation of dual ownership. Anything of the kind had always been resisted in this country. It could not be asserted that the buildings on the vast majority of holdings in this country were not in a satisfactory condition, and it was not fair that the lessee, who might be there to-day and gone to-morrow, should have the right to make alterations without even a stipulation that

Mr. Walter Long.

they should be in harmony with the character of the existing structures. Under this Bill the landlord might have to find money for buildings that had been put up by the tenant and had proved useless for the purpose for which they were erected. By giving the tenant that control of the property which now rested in the landlord's hands the House would be taking clear and definite steps in the direction of creating dual ownership, a principle unsound and injurious, to resist which, even if there were no other argument for opposing the Bill, he would cordially support the Amendment of his noble friend.

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 332; Noes, 77. (Division List No. 7.)

AYES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
Acland, Francis Dyke
Alden, Percy
Allen, Charles P. (Gloucester)
Ambrose, Robert
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Asquith, Rt. Hn. Herbert Henry
Astbury, John Meir
Balfour, Robert (Lanark)
Baring, Godfrey (Isle of Wight)
Barker, John
Barlow, John E. (Somerset)
Barlow, Percy (Bedford)
Barnes, G. N.
Barran, Rowland Hirst
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Beale, W. P.
Beauchamp, E.
Beaumont, Hubert (Eastbourne
Beck, A. Cecil
Bell, Richard
Bellairs, Carlyon
Benn, W. (T'w'r Hamlets, S. Geo
Bethell, T. R. (Essex, Maldon)
Billson, Alfred
Birrell, Rt. Hon. Augustine
Black, Arthur W. (Bedfordshire
Boland, John
Brace, William
Branch, James
Bright, J. A.
Brocklehurst, W. D.
Brodie, H. C.
Brooke, Stopford
Brunner, J. F. L. (Lancs., Leigh)
Bryce, Rt. Hn. James (Aberdeen
Bryce, J. A. (Inverness Burghs)
Buckmaster, Stanley O.
Burke, E. Haviland
Burns, Rt. Hon. John
Burt, Rt. Hon. Thomas
Buxton, Rt. Hn. Sydney Charles
Byles, William Pollard
Cairns, Thomas
Caldwell, James
Cameron, Robert
Carr-Gomm, H. W.
Causton, Rt Hn Richard Knight
Cawley, Frederick
Cheetham, John Frederick
Cherry, R. R.
Clarke, C. Goddard (Peckham)
Cleland, J. W.
Clough, W.
Clynes, J. R.
Coats, Sir T. Glen (Renfrew, W.)
Cobbold, Felix Thornley
Collins, Stephen (Lambeth)
Collins, Sir Wm J (S. Pancras, W
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Cooper, G. J.
Corbett, C H (Sussex, E. Grinst'd
Cornwall, Sir Edwin A.
Cox, Harold
Crean, Eugene
Cremer, William Randal
Crombie, John William
Crooks, William
Crosfield, A. H.
Cross, Alexander
Crossley, William J.
Cullinan, J.
Dalmeny, Lord
Davies, M. Vaughan-(Cardigan
Davies, Timothy (Fulham)
Davies, W. Howell (Bristol, S.
Delany, William
Devlin, Chas. Ramsay (Galway
Devlin, Joseph (Belfast, West)
Dewar, Arthur (Edinburgh, S.)
Dewar, John A. (Inverness-sh.
Dickinson, W H (St. Pancras, N.
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Dobson, Thomas W.
Dolan, Charles Joseph
Donelan, Captain A.
Duckworth, James
Duffy, William J.
Dunn, A. Edward (Camborne)
Dunne, Major E. M. (Walsall)
Edwards, Frank (Radnor)
Elibank, Master of
Ellis, Rt. Hon. John Edward
Erskine, David C.
Esmonde, Sir Thomas
Essex, R. W.
Evans, Samuel T.
Eve, Harry Trelawney
Everett, R. Lacey
Faber, G. H. (Boston)
Fenwick, Charles
Ferens, T. R.
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Flynn, James Christopher
Foster, Rt. Hon. Sir Walter
Fuller, J. M. F.
Furness, Sir Christopher
Gibb, James (Harrow)
Gilhooly, James
Ginnell, L.
Gladstone, Rt. Hn. Herbert John
Glendinning, R. G.
Glover, Thomas
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Gooch, George Peabody
Grant, Corrie
Greenwood, G. (Peterborough)
Greenwood, Hamar (York)
Guest, Hon. Ivor Churchill
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Haldane, Rt. Hon. Richard B.
Halpin, J.
Hammond, John
Harcourt, Rt. Hn. Lewis
Hardie, J. Keir (Merthyr Tydvil
Hardy, George A. (Suffolk)
Harmsworth, Cecil B. (Worc'r)
Harmsworth, R. L (Caithn'ss-sh
Hart-Davies, T.
Harwood, George
Haslam, Lewis (Monmouth)
Haworth, Arthur A.
Hazel, Dr. A. E.
Hazleton, Richard
Healy, Timothy Michael
Hedges, A. Paget
Helme, Norval Watson
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Herbert, Colonel Ivor (Mon., S.)
Herbert, T. Arnold (Wycombe)
Higham, John Sharpe
Hodge, John
Hogan, Michael
Holland, Sir William Henry
Hope, W Bateman (Somerset, N.
Howard, Hon. Geoffrey
Hudson, Walter
Hutton, Alfred Eddison
Idris, T. H. W.
Illingworth, Percy H.
Isaacs, Rufus Daniel
Jackson, R. S.
Jacoby, James Alfred
Jardine, Sir J.
Jones, D. Brynmor (Swansea)
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Jones, William (Carnarvonsh.
Joyce, Michael
Kekewich, Sir George
Kelley, George D.
Kennedy, Vincent Paul
Kilbride, Denis
Kincaid-Smith, Captain
King, Alfred John (Knutsford)
Kitson, Sir James

Laidlaw, Robert
Lamb, EdmundG.(Leominster
Lamb, Earnest H. (Rochester)
Lambert, George
Lamont, Norman
Law, Hugh Alexander
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Leese,SirJosephF.(Accrington
Lehmann, R. C.
Lever, W.H.(Cheshire,Wirral)
Lewis, John Herbert
Lloyd-George, Rt. Hon. David
Lough, Thomas
Lundon, W.
Lupton, Arnold
Luttrell, Hugh Courteney
Lyell, Charles Henry
Lynch, H. B.
Macdonald, J. R. (Leicester)
Macdonald,J.M(FalkirkB'ghs
Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
Macpherson, J. T.
MacVeagh,Jeremiah(Down,S.
MacVeigh,Charles(Donegal,E.
M'Arthur, William
M'Kean, John
M'Kenna, Reginald
M'Laren, Sir C. B. (Leicester)
M'Laren, H. D. (Stafford, W.)
M'Micking, Major G.
Maddison, Frederick
Mansfield, Harry (Northants)
Mansfield,H.Rendall(Lincoln)
Marks,G.Croydon(Launceston
Markham, F. J.
Massie, J.
Masterman, C. F. G.
Meehan, Patrick A.
Menzies, Walter
Micklem, Nathaniel
Molteno, Percy Alfred
Mond, A.
Montagu, E. S.
Montgomery, H. H.
Mooney, J. J.
Morgan, G. Hay (Cornwall)
Morgan,J.Lloyd(Carmarthen)
Morrell, Philip
Morse, L. L.
Morton, Alpheus Cleophas
Murphy, John
Murray, James
Myer, Horatio
Napier, T. B.
Newnes, F. (Notts, Bassetlaw)
Nicholls, George
Nolan, Joseph
Nuttall, Harry
O'Brien, Kendal(Tipper'ryMid
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Connor,James(Wicklow,W.
O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
O'Doherty, Philip
O'Donnell, C. J. (Walworth)
O'Grady, J.
O'Kelly, Conor (Mayo, N.)
O'Malley, William
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
Palmer, Sir Charles Mark
Paul, Herbert
Pease, J. A. (Saffron Walden)
Perks, Robert William
Philipps,J Wynford(Pembroke
Price, C. E. (Edinb'ghCentral)
Price,RobertJohn(Norfolk,E.)
Priestley, Arthur (Grantham)
Priestley,W.E.B.(Bradford,E.
Radford, G. H.
Rainy, A. Rolland
Raphael, Herbert H.
Rea, Russell (Gloucester)
Redmond,John E. (Waterford)
Redmond, William (Clare)
Rees, J. D.
Rickett, J. Compton
Ridsdale, E. A.
Roberts, Charles H. (Lincoln)
Roberts, G. H. (Norwich)
Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Robertson, J. M. (Tyneside)
Robertson,SirG.Scott(Bradf'rd
Robinson, S.
Robson, Sir William Snowdon
Roche, Augustine (Cork)
Rogers, F. E. Newman
Rose, Charles Day
Rowlands, J.
Runciman, Walter
Rutherford, V. H. (Brentford)
Samuel, HerbertL.(Cleveland)
Scarisbrick, T. T. L.
Schwann, C. Duncan (Hyde)
Schwann,Chas.E.(Manchester
Scott,A.H.(AshtonunderLyne
Sears, J. E.
Seaverns, J. H.
Seddon, J.
Seely, Major J. B.
Shaw, Rt. Hon. T.(Hawick B.)
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Simon, John Allsebrook
Sinclair, Rt. Hon. John
Sloan, Thomas Henry
Smeaton, Donald Mackenzie
Smyth, Thomas (Leitrim, S.)
Snowden, P.
Spicer, Albert
Stanley,Hn.A.Lyulph(Chesh.)
Steadman, W. C.
Stewart, Halley (Greenock)
Strachey, Sir Edward
Straus, B. S. (Mile End)
Strauss, E. A. (Abingdon)
Sullivan, Donal
Summerbell, T.
Sutherland, J. E.
Taylor, Austin (East Toxteth)
Taylor, John W. (Durham)
Tennant, E. P. (Salisbury)
Thomas,Abel(Carmarthen,E.)
Thomas,DavidAlfred(Merthyr
Thompson,J.WH.(Somerset,E
Tomkinson, James
Torrance, A. M.
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Waldron, Laurence Ambrose
Walker, H. De R. (Leicester)
Wallace, Robert
Walsh, Stephen
Walton,Sir John L.(Leeds, S.)
Ward, W. (DudleyS'thampton
Wardle, George J.
Warner,Thomas Courtenay T.
Wason,JohnCathcart(Orkney)
Waterlow, D. S.
Watt, H. Anderson
White, J. D. (Dumbartonshire
Whitehead, Rowland
Whiteley,George (York,W.R.)
Wiles, Thomas
Williams, J. (Glamorgan)
Williams,Osmond (Merioneth)
Williams, W. L. (Carmarthen)
Williamson,A. (Elgin & Nairn
Wills, Arthur Walters
Wilson, C. H. W. (Hull, W.)
Wilson, J. H. (Middlesbrough)
Winfrey, R.
Wodehouse,Lord(Norfolk,Mid
Wood, T. M'Kinnon
Young, Samuel
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Mr. Agar-Robartes and Mr. Soares.

NOES.

Acland-Hood,RtHn.SirAlexF
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Anstruther-Gray, Major
Arnold-Forster,RtHn.HughO
Aubrey-Fletcher,Rt.Hn.SirH.
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Capt. C. B. (Hornsey)
Baring,Hon.Guy(Winchester)
Beckett, Hon. Gervase
Bridgeman, W. Clive
Brotherton, Edward Allen
Burdett-Coutts, W.
Butcher, Samuel Henry
Campbell,J.H.M(DublinUniv.
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Castlereagh, Viscount
Cave, George
Cavendish,Rt.Hn.VictorC.W.
Cecil, Evelyn (Ashton Manor)
Cecil, Lord J. P. J. (Stamford)
Cecil,Lord R. (Marylebone,E.)
Clarke, Sir Edward (City Lon.
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A.E.
Corbett,A.Cameron (Glasgow)
Craig, Capt. James (Down, E.)
Craik, Sir Henry
Dalrymple, Viscount
Dixon-Hartland, Sir F. Dixon
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Duncan, R. (Lanark, Govan)
Faber, George Denison (York)
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Fletcher, J. S.
Forster, Henry William
Gardner, Ernest (Berks, East)
Gibbs, G. A. (Bristol, West)
Haddock, George R.
Hamilton, Marquess of
Hardy,Laurence(KentAshford
Harrison-Broadley, Col. H. B.
Hervey,FW.F.(BuryS.Edm'ds
Houston, Robert Paterson
Hunt, Rowland
Kennaway,Rt.Hn.Sir John H.
Kenyon-Slaney,Rt.Hn.Col.W

Kimber, Sir Henry
Lane-Fox, G. R.
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Lockwood, Rt. Hn. Lt-Col. A. R.
Long, Col. Charles W. (Evesham
Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (Dublin S.
Lowe, Sir Francis William
MacIver, David (Liverpool)
Magnus, Sir Philip
Mason, James F. (Windsor)
Morpeth, Viscount
Nield, Herbert
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Pease, Herbert Pike (Darlingt'n
Percy, Earl
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Rawlinson, John Frederick P.
Roberts, S. (Sheffield, Ecclesall
Rothschild, Hon. Lionel Walter
Sassoon, Sir Edward Albert
Scott, Sir S. (Marylebone, W.)
Smith, Abel H. (Hertford, East)
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (Strand)
Starkey, John R.
Talbot, Rt. Hn. J. G. (Oxf'd Univ
Thomson, W. Mitchell- (Lanark
Thornton, Percy M.
Turnour, Viscount
Walker, Col W. H. (Lancashire)
Walrond, Hon. Lionel
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Wortley, Rt. Hn. C. B. Stuart-

Tellers for the Noes—Viscount Helmsley and Mr. Hicks Beach.

Main Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 334; Noes, 81. (Division List No. 8.)

AYES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
Acland, Francis Dyke
Alden, Percy
Allen, Charles P. (Gloucester)
Ambrose, Robert
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Astbury, John Meir
Balfour, Robert (Lanark)
Baring, Godfrey (Isle of Wight)
Barker, John
Barlow, John E. (Somerset)
Barlow, Percy (Bedford)
Barnes, G. N.
Barran, Rowland Hirst
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Beale, W. P.
Beauchamp, E.
Beaumont, Hubert (Eastbourne
Beaumont, W. C. B. (Hexham)
Beck, A. Cecil
Bell, Richard
Bellairs, Carlyon
Benn, W. (T'w'r Hamlets, S. Geo.
Bethell, T. R. (Essex, Maldon)
Billson, Alfred
Birrell, Rt. Hon. Augustine
Black, Arthur W. (Bedfordshire
Boland, John
Bolton, T. D (Derbyshire, N.E.)
Brace, William
Branch, James
Bright, J. A.
Brocklehurst, W. D.
Brodie, H. C.
Brooke, Stopford
Brunner, J. F. L. (Lancs., Leigh)
Bryce, Rt. Hn. James (Aberdeen
Bryce, J. A. (Inverness Burghs)
Buckmaster, Stanley O.
Burke, E. Haviland-
Burns, Rt. Hon. John
Burt, Rt. Hon. Thomas
Buxton, Rt. Hn. Sydney Charles
Byles, William Pollard
Cairns, Thomas
Caldwell, James
Cameron, Robert
Carr-Gomm, H. W.
Causton, Rt. Hn Richard Knight
Cawley, Frederick
Cheetham, John Frederick
Cherry, R. R.
Clarke, C. Goddard (Peckham)
Cleland, J. W.
Clough, W.
Clynes, J. R.
Coats, Sir T. Glen (Renfrew, W.)
Cobbold, Felix Thornley
Collins, Steven (Lambeth)
Collins, Sir Wm J. (S. Pancras, W
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Cooper, G. J.
Corbett, C H (Sussex, E. Grinst'd
Cornwall, Sir Edwin A.
Cox, Harold
Crean, Eugene
Cremer, William Randal
Crombie, John William
Crooks, William
Crosfield, A. H.
Cross, Alexander
Crossley, William, J.
Cullinan, J.
Dalmeny, Lord
Davies, M. Vaughan- (Cardigan
Davies, Timothy (Fulham)
Davies, W. Howell (Bristol, S.)
Delany, William
Devlin Charles Ramsay (Galway
Devlin, Joseph (Belfast, West)
Dewar, Arthur (Edinburgh, S.)
Dewar, John A. (Inverness-sh.
Dickinson, W. H. (St Pancras, N.
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Dobson, Thomas W.
Dolan, Charles Joseph
Donelan, Captain A.
Duckworth, James
Duffy, William J.
Dunn, A. Edward (Camborne)
Dunne, Major E. M. (Walsall)
Edwards, Frank (Radnor)
Elibank, Master of
Ellis, Rt. Hon. John Edward
Erskine, David C.
Esmonde, Sir Thomas
Essex, R. W.
Evans, Samuel T.
Eve, Harry Trelawney
Everett, R. Lacy
Faber, G. H. (Boston)
Fenwick, Charles
Ferens, T. R.
Ferguson, R. C. Munro
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Flynn, James Christopher
Foster, Rt. Hon. Sir Walter
Fuller, J. M. F.
Furness, Sir Christopher
Gibb, James (Harrow)
Gilhooly, James
Ginnell, L.
Gladstone, Rt. Hn. Herbert John
Glendinning, R. G.
Glover, Thomas
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Gooch, George Peabody
Grant, Corrie
Greenwood, G. (Peterborough)
Greenwood, Hamar (York)
Guest, Hon. Ivor Churchill
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Haldane, Rt. Hon. Richard B.
Halpin, J.
Hammond, John
Harcourt, Rt. Hon. Lewis
Hardie, J. Keir (Merthyr Tydvil)
Hardy, George A. (Suffolk)
Harmsworth, Cecil B. (Worc'r)
Harmsworth, R. L. (Caithn'ss-sh
Hart-Davies, T.
Harwood, George
Haslam, Lewis (Monmouth)
Haworth, Arthur A.
Hazel, Dr. A. E.
Hazleton, Richard
Healy, Timothy Michael
Hedges, A. Paget
Helme, Norval Watson
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Herbert, Colonel Ivor (Mon., S.)
Herbert, T. Arnold (Wycombe)
Higham, John Sharp
Hobart, Sir Robert
Hodge, John
Hogan, Michael
Holland, Sir William Henry
Hope, W. Bateman (Somerset N
Howard, Hon. Geoffrey
Hudson, Walter
Hutton, Alfred Eddison
Hyde, Clarendon
Idris, T. H. W.
Illingworth, Percy H.
Isaacs, Rufus Daniel
Jackson, R. S.
Jacoby, James Alfred
Jardine, Sir J.
Jones, David Brynmor (Swansea
Jones, Lief (Appleby)
Jones, William (Carnarvonshire
Jowett, F. W.
Joyce, Michael
Kekewich, Sir George
Kelley, George D.

Kennedy, Vincent Paul
Kilbride, Denis
Kincaid-Smith, Captain
King, Alfred John (Knutsford)
Kitson, Sir James
Laidlaw, Robert
Lamb, Edmund G.(Leominster
Lamb, Ernest H. (Rochester)
Lambert, George
Lamont, Norman
Law, Hugh Alexander
Lawson, Sir Wilfred
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Leese,SirJosephF.(Accrington
Lehmann, R. C.
Lever, W. H. (Cheshire, Wirral)
Lewis, John Herbert
Lloyd-George, Rt. Hon. David
Lundon, W.
Lupton, Arnold
Luttrell, Hugh Courteney
Lyell, Charles Henry
Lynch, H. B.
Macdonald, J. R. (Leicester)
Macdonald,JM.(FalkirkB'ghs
Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
Macpherson, J. T.
MacVeagh, Jeremiah (Down, S.
MacVeigh, Charles (Donegal, E.
M‘Arthur, William
M‘Kean, John
M‘Laren, Sir C. B. (Leicester)
M‘Laren, H. D. (Stafford, W.)
M‘Micking, Major G.
Maddison, Frederick
Mansfield, Harry (Northants)
Mansfield, H. Rendall (Lincoln)
Markham, Arthur Basil
Marks,G.Croydon(Launceston
Marnham, F. J.
Massie, J.
Masterman, C. F. G.
Meehan, Patrick A.
Menzies, Walter
Micklem, Nathaniel
Molteno, Percy Alfred
Mond, A.
Montagu, E. S.
Montgomery, H. H.
Mooney, J. J.
Morgan, G. Hay (Cornwall)
Morgan, J. Lloyd (Carmarthen)
Morrell, Philip
Morse, L. L.
Morton, Alpheus Cleophas
Murphy, John
Murray, James

Myer, Horatio
Napier, T. B.
Newnes, F. (Notts, Bassetlaw)
Nicholls, George
Nolan, Joseph
Norman, Henry
Nuttall, Harry
O'Brien,Kendal(TipperaryMid
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Connor,James(Wicklow,W.)
O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
O'Doherty, Philip
O'Donnell, C. J. (Walworth)
O'Kelly, Conor (Mayo, N.)
O'Malley, William
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
Palmer, Sir Charles Mark
Paul, Herbert
Pease, J. A. (Saffron Walden)
Perks, Robert William
Philipps,J.Wynford(Pembroke
Price, C.E. (Edinb'gh,Central)
Price,RobertJohn(Norfolk,E.)
Priestley,W.E.B.(Bradford,E.
Radford, G. H.
Rainy, A. Rolland
Raphael, Herbert H.
Rea, Russell (Gloucester)
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Redmond, William (Clare)
Rees, J. D.
Rickett, J. Compton
Ridsdale, E. A.
Roberts, Charles H. (Lincoln)
Roberts, G. H. (Norwich)
Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Robertson, J. M. (Tyneside)
Robertson,SirG.Scott(Bradf'rd
Robinson, S.
Robson, Sir William Snowdon
Roche, Augustine (Cork)
Roche, John (Galway, East)
Rogers, F. E. Newman
Rose, Charles Day
Rowlands, J.
Runciman, Walter
Rutherford, V. H. (Brentford)
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Scarisbrick, T. T. L.
Schwann, C. Duncan (Hyde)
Schwann,Chas.E.(Manchester
Scott,A.H.(AshtonunderLyne
Sears, J. E.
Seaverns, J. H.
Seddon, J.
Seely, Major J. B.

Shaw, Rt. Hon. T. (Hawick B.)
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Simon, John Allsebrook
Sinclair, Rt. Hon. John
Sloan, Thomas Henry
Smeaton, Donald Mackenzie
Smyth, Thomas (Leitrim, S.)
Snowden, P.
Spicer, Albert
Stanley,Hn.A.Lyulph(Chesh.)
Steadman, W. C.
Stewart, Halley (Greenock)
Strachey, Sir Edward
Straus, B. S. (Mile End)
Strauss, E. A. (Abingdon)
Sullivan, Donal
Summerbell, T.
Sutherland, J. E.
Taylor, Austin (East Toxteth)
Taylor, John W. (Durham)
Tennant, E. P. (Salisbury)
Thomas, Abel (Carmarthen, E.)
Thomas,DavidAlfred(Merthyr
Thompson,J.W.H.(Somerset,E
Tomkinson, James
Torrance, A. M.
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Waldron, Laurence Ambrose
Walker, H. De R. (Leicester)
Wallace, Robert
Walsh, Stephen
Walton, Sir John L. (Leeds, S.)
Ward,W.Dudley(Southampton
Wardle, George J.
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Wason,JohnCathcart(Orkney)
Waterlow, D. S.
Watts, H. Anderson
White, J. D. (Dumbartonshire)
Whitehead, Rowland
Whiteley, George (York, W.R.)
Wiles, Thomas
Williams, J. (Glamorgan)
Williams, Osmond (Merioneth)
Williams, W. L. (Carmarthen)
Wills, Arthur Walters
Wilson, J. H. (Middlesbrough)
Winfrey, R.
Wodehouse,Lord(Norfolk,Mid
Wood, T. M‘Kinnon
Young, Samuel
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE AYES.—Mr. Agar-Robartes and Mr. Soares.

NOES.

Acland-Hood,RtHn.SirAlexF.
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Anstruther-Gray, Major
Arnold-Forster,RtHn.HughO.
Aubrey-Fletcher,Rt.Hn.SirH.
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Capt. C. B. (Hornsey)
Baring, Hon. Guy (Winchester)
Beckett, Hon. Gervase
Bridgeman, W. Clive
Brotherton, Edward Allen
Burdett-Coutts, W.
Butcher, Samuel Henry

Campbell,J.H.M(Dublin Univ
Carlile, E. Hildred
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Castlereagh, Viscount
Cave, George
Cavendish,Rt.Hn.VictorC.W.
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Cecil, Lord J. P. J. (Stamford)
Cecil, Lord R. (Marylebone, E.)
ClarkeSirEdward(CityLondon
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Craig,CaptainJames(Down,E.)

Craik, Sir Henry
Dalrymple, Viscount
Dixon-Hartland,SirFredDixon
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Duncan,Robert(Lanark,Govan
Faber, George Denison (York)
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Fletcher, J. S.
Forster, Henry William
Gardner, Ernest (Berks, East)
Gibbs, G. A. (Bristol, West)
Haddock, George R.
Hamilton, Marquess of

Hardy,Laurence(Kent,Ashford
Harrison-Broadley, Col. H. B.
Hervey,F.W.F.(BuryS.Edm'ds
Houston, Robert Paterson
Hunt, Rowland
Kennaway,Rt.Hon.SirJohnH.
Kenyon-Slaney,Rt.Hn.Col.W.
Kimber, Sir Henry
Lane-Fox, G. R.
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Lockwood,RtHn.Lt.-Col.A.R.
Long,Col.Charles,W(Evesham
Long,Rt.Hn.Walter(DublinS.
Lowe, Sir Francis William
MacIver, David (Liverpool)
Magnus, Sir Philip
Marks, Harry Hananel (Kent)
Mason, James F. (Windsor)
Morpeth, Viscount
Nield, Herbert
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Pease,HerbertPike(Darlington
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Rawlinson, John Frederick P.
Remnant, James Farquharson
Roberts, S.(Sheffield, Ecclesall
Rothschild,Hon.LionelWalter
Sassoon, Sir Edward Albert
Scott, Sir S. (Marylebone, W.)
Smith,Abel H.(Hertford,East)
Smith, Hon. W. F. D.(Strand)
Starkey, John R.
Talbot,Rt.HnJ.G.(Oxf'dUniv
Thomson,W.Mitchell-(Lanark
Thorton, Percy M.
Turnour, Viscount
Walker,Col.W.H.(Lancashire)
Walrond, Hon. Lionel
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Wilson,A.Stanley(York,E.R.)
Wortley,Rt.Hon. C.B. Stuart-
Younger, George

Tellers for the Noes—Viscount Helmsley and Mr. Hicks Beach.

Bill read a second time.

Mr. AGAR-ROBARTES moved that the Bill be referred to the Standing Committee on Trade.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be committed to the Standing Committee on Trade, &c."—(*Mr. Agar Robartes.*)

Sir EDWARD CARSON (Dublin University) hoped the House would not refer the Bill to the Standing Committee on Trade. The experience gathered from the practice of recent years of referring to such Committees Bills of a highly contentious character, such as this had been shown to be, ought to deter the House from blocking those Committees with Bills which would be hotly contested. The House might be perfectly sure, however, from what had taken place, that although the Members of the Opposition would be in a very small minority on the Committee on Trade, every line of this Bill would be hotly contested on that Committee. The experience they had had last year and the year before in regard to sending a certain number of contested Bills to Committees of this kind showed that if the system were pursued, the Committees were likely to break down altogether. He himself, as a law officer of the late Government, had sent Bills to the Law Committee, which were of a highly contentious character. In every one of those which he could call to mind there was a consistent and persistent opposition. Weeks and weeks were spent in the Grand Committee in debating those Bills, and measures which were of an uncontentious character were delayed, while not a single one of the contentious Bills was passed into law. Everyone knew that these Committees were originally set up for the consideration of Bills upon which the House was practically agreed in principle and were constituted for examining the measure—legal details in the Committee on Law and commercial details in the Committee on Trade. It was never intended and, as had been said over and over again in this House, they never could get these Committees to do any practical work, if they did refer to them measures upon which the House was not agreed. He therefore hoped the House would pause before they sent this Bill to the Committee on Trade. If they did he thought they would find that other Bills which should legitimately come before that Committee would be delayed and would make no progress.

Mr. LAURENCE HARDY (Kent, Ashford) also wished to raise his voice against sending a contentious Bill to a Grand Committee, especially when it was a Bill introduced by a private Member. At the end of the last session the panel of Chairman, which consisted of three representatives of the Government, one who represented the Nationalist Party, and two very old and experienced Members of the Liberal Party, unanimously made a report in support of the contention that these Standing Committees were not suited to the particular form of contentious business which had mainly been sent to them. These Bills had not been sent to them because they were considered a fit vehicle for carrying on the business, but because it was hoped that by that means one particular Private Bill could get precedence of another. That practice had to a great extent destroyed the usefulness of the Grand Committees and had prejudiced them in the eyes of the House. At a moment when the House was about to embark upon the consideration of great questions with regard to the procedure of the House, and when they knew that devolution was one of the great articles of the programme which the Government were to bring forward, he asked the House not to go against the opinion of those who had the greatest experience in this matter. The Bills of private Members which had been sent to these Committees had taken up their time and rendered them unable to enter upon more useful business. It had been, they knew, extremely difficult to get a quorum.

Mr. AGAR-ROBARTES rose in his place, and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put."

Question put, "That the Question be now put."

The House divided:—Ayes, 306; Noes, 72. (Division List No. 9.)

AYES

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.
Acland, Francis Dyke
Alden, Percy
Allen, Charles P. (Gloucester)
Ambrose, Robert
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Astbury, John Mier
Balfour, Robert (Lanark)
Baring, Godfrey (Isle of Wight
Barlow, John E. (Somerset)
Barlow, Percy (Bedford)
Barnard, E. B.
Barnes, G. N.
Barran, Rowland Hirst
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Beale, W. P.
Beauchamp, E.
Beaumont, Herbert Eastbourne
Bellairs, Carlyon
Benn, W (T'w'r Hamlets, S. Geo
Bertram, Julius
Bethell, T. R. (Essex, Maldon
Billson, Alfred
Birrell, Rt. Hon. Augustine
Black, Arthur W. (Bedfordshire
Boland, John
Bolton, T. D. (Derbyshire, N.E.
Brace, William
Branch, James
Bright, J. A.
Brocklehurst, W. D.
Brooke, Stopford
Brunner, J. F. L. (Lancs., Leigh
Bryce, Rt. Hn James (Aberdeen
Bryce, J. A. (Inverness Burghs
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Buckmaster, Stanley O.
Burke, E. Haviland
Burns, Rt. Hon. John
Burt, Rt. Hon. Thomas
Byles, William Pollard
Cairns, Thomas
Caldwell, James
Cameron, Robert
Carr-Gomm, H. W.
Causton, Rt Hn Richard Knight
Cawley, Frederick
Cheetham, John Frederick
Cherry, R. R.
Clarke, C. Goddard (Peckham
Cleland, J. W
Clynes, J. R.
Coats, Sir T. Glen (Renfrew, W.
Cobbold, Felix Thornley
Collins, Stephen (Lambeth)
Collins, Sir Wm J. (S. Pancras W
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Cooper, G. J.
Corbett, C H (Sussex, E. Grinst'd
Cornwall, Sir Edwin A.
Crean, Eugene
Cremer, William Randal
Crombie, John William
Crooks, William
Crosfield, A. H.
Cross, Alexander
Crossley, William J.
Cullinan, J.
Dalmeny, Lord
Dalziel, James Henry
Davies, M. Vaughan (Cardigan
Davies, Timothy (Fulham)
Davies, W. Howell (Bristol, S.
Delany, William
Devlin, Chs. Ramsay (Galway
Delvin, Joseph (Belfast, West
Dewar, Arthur (Edinburgh, S
Dewar, John A. (Inverness-sh.
Dickinson, W. H. (St. Pancras N
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Dobson, Thomas W.
Dolan, Charles Joseph
Donelan, Captain A.
Duckworth, James
Duffy William J.
Duncan, Robert (Lanark Govan
Dunn, A. Edward (Camborne)
Dunne, Major E. M. (Walsall)
Edwards, Frank (Radnor)
Elibank, Master of

Ellis, Rt. Hon. John Edward
Erskine, David C.
Esmonde, Sir Thomas
Essex, R. W.
Evans, Samuel T.
Eve, Harry Trelawney
Everett, R. Lacey
Fenwick, Charles
Ferens, T. R.
Ferguson, R. C. Munro
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Flynn, James Christopher
Foster, Rt. Hon. Sir Walter
Fuller, J. M. F.
Furness, Sir Christopher
Gibb, James (Harrow)
Gilhooly, James
Ginnell, L.
Glendinning, R. G.
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Gooch, George Peabody
Grant, Corrie
Greenwood, G. (Peterborough)
Griffith, Ellis, J.
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Halpin, J.
Hammond, John
Harcourt, Rt. Hon. Lewis
Hardie, J. Keir (Merthyr Tydvil
Hardy, George A. (Suffolk)
Harmsworth, Cecil B. (Worc'r
Harmsworth, R. L. (Caithn'ssh
Hart-Davies, T.
Haslam, Lewis (Monmouth)
Haworth, Arthur A.
Hazel, Dr. A. E.
Hazleton, Richard
Healy, Timothy Michael
Helme, Norval Watson
Herbert, Colonel Ivor (Mon. S.
Herbert, T. Arnold (Wycombe
Higham, John Sharp
Hobart, Sir Robert
Hogan, Michael
Holland, Sir William Henry
Hope, W. Bateman (Somerset N
Howard, Hon. Geoffrey
Hutton, Alfred Eddison
Hyde, Clarendon
Idris, T. H. W.
Illingworth, Percy H.
Isaacs, Rufus Daniel
Jackson, R. S.
Jacoby, James Alfred
Jardine, Sir J.
Jones, David Brynmor Swansea
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Jones William (Carnarvonshire
Jowett, F. W.
Joyce, Michael
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kekewich, Sir George
Kennedy, Vincent Paul
Kilbride, Dennis
Kincaid-Smith, Captain
King, Alfred John (Knutsford
Laidlaw, Robert
Lamb, Edmund G. (Leominster
Lamb, Ernest H. (Rochester)
Lambert, George
Lamont, Norman
Law, Hugh Alexander
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid
Layland-Barratt, Francis

Leese, Sir Joseph F. (Accrington
Lehmann, R. C.
Lever, W. H. (Cheshire, Wirral
Lewis, John Herbert
Lloyd-George, Rt. Hon. David
Lupton, Arnold
Luttrell, Hugh Courteney
Lyell, Charles Henry
Lynch, H. B.
Macdonald, J. R. (Leicester)
Macdonald, J M. (Falkirk B'ghs
Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah (Down. S
MacVeigh, Charles (Donegal, E
M'Arthur, William
M'Kean, John
M'Killop, W.
M'Laren, Sir C. B. (Leicester)
M'Laren, H. D. (Stafford, W.
Maddison, Frederick
Mansfield, Harry (Northants)
Mansfield, H. Rendall (Lincoln
Markham, Arthur Basil
Marks, G. Croydon (Launceston
Marnham, F. J.
Massie, J.
Meehan, Patrick A.
Menzies, Walter
Micklem, Nathaniel
Molteno, Percy Alfred
Mond, A.
Montagu, E. S.
Montgomery, H. H.
Mooney, J. J.
Morgan, G. Hay (Cornwall)
Morgan, J. Lloyd (Carmarthen
Morrell, Philip
Morse, L. L.
Morton, Alpheus Cleophas
Murphy, John
Murray, James
Myer, Horatio
Napier, T. B.
Newnes, F. (Notts, Bassetlaw
Nicholls, George
Nolan, Joseph
Norman, Henry
Nuttall, Harry
O'Brien, Kendal Tipperary Mid
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W.
O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
O'Doherty, Philip
O'Donnell, C. J. (Walworth)
O'Kelly, Conor (Mayo, N.)
O'Malley, William
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
O'Shee, James John
Palmer, Sir Charles Mark
Paul, Herbert
Pease, J. A. (Saffron Walden)
Philipps, J Wynford (Pembroke
Price, C. E. (Edinb'gh, Central
Price, Robert John (Norfolk, E
Radford, G. H.
Rainy, A. Rolland
Raphael, Herbert H.
Rea, Russell (Gloucester)
Redmond, John E. (Waterford
Redmond, William (Clare)
Rees, J. D.
Richards, T. F. (Wolverh'mpt'n

Rickett, J. Compton
Ridsdale, E. A.
Roberts, Charles H. (Lincoln)
Roberts, G. H. (Norwich)
Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Robertson, J. M. (Tyneside)
Robertson, Sir G. Scott (Bradf'rd
Robinson, S.
Robson, Sir William Snowdon
Roche, Augustine (Cork)
Roche, John (Galway, East)
Rogers, F. E. Newman
Rose, Charles Day
Runciman, Walter
Rutherford, V. H. (Brentford
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland
Scarisbrick, T. T. L.
Schwann, Chas. E. (Manchester
Scott, A. H. (Ashton under Lyne
Sears, J. E.
Seaverns, J. H.
Seddon, J.
Seely, Major J. B.
Shaw, Rt. Hn. T. (Hawick B.
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Simon, John Allsebrook
Sinclair, Rt. Hn. John
Sloan, Thomas Henry
Smeaton, Donald Mackenzie
Smyth, Thomas (Leitrim, S.)
Snowden, P.
Spicer, Albert
Stanley, Hn. A. Lyulph (Chesh
Steadman, W. C.
Stewart, Halley (Greenock)
Strachey, Sir Edward
Straus, B. S. (Mile End)
Strauss, E. A. (Abingdon)
Sullivan, Donal
Sutherland, J. E.
Taylor, Austin (East Toxteth
Thomas, Abel (Carmarthen, E.
Thompson, J. W H (Somerset, E.
Tomkinson, James
Torrance, A. M.
Waldron, Laurence Ambrose
Walker, H. De R. (Leicester)
Wallace, Robert
Walton, Sir John L. (Leeds, S)
Ward, W. Dudley (S'thampton
Wardle, George J.
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Wason, John Cathcart (Orkney
Waterlow, D. S.
Watt, H. Anderson
Wedgwood, Josiah C.
Whitehead, Rowland
Whitley, George (York, W.R.
Wiles, Thomas
Williams, J. (Glamorgan)
Williams, W. L. (Carmarthen)
Wills, Arthur Walters
Wilson, J. H. (Middlesbrough)
Wodehouse, Lord (Norfolk, Mid.
Wood, T. M'Kinnon
Young, Samuel

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Mr. Agar-Robartes and Mr. Soares.

NOES.

Acland-Hood,Rt Hn.SirAlexF
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Anstruther-Gray, Major
Arnold-Forster,Rt.Hn.HughO
Aubrey-Fletcher,Rt.Hn.SirH.
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Capt. C. B. (Hornsey
Baring, Hn. Guy (Winchester
Beckett, Hon. Gervase
Bridgeman, W. Clive
Brotherton, Edward Allen
Bull, Sir William James
Burdett-Coutts, W.
Butcher, Samuel Henry
Campbell,J.H.M.(DublinUniv
Carlile, E. Hildred
Carson, Rt. Hn. Sir Edw. H.
Castlereagh, Viscount
Cave, George
Cavendish,Rt.Hn.VictorC.W.
Cecil, Lord J. P. J. (Stamford
Cecil, Lord R. (Marylebone,E
Clarke,Sir Edward(City L'don
Craig, CaptainJames(DownE.
Craik, Sir Henry
Dalrymple, Viscount
Dixon-HartlandSirFredDixon
Douglas, Rt. Hn. A. Akers-
Faber, George Denison (York)
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Fletcher, J. S.
Forster, Henry William
Gardner, Ernest (Berks, East)
Gibbs, G. A. (Bristol, West)
Haddock, George R.
Hamilton, Marquess of
Hardy,Laurence(KentAshford
Harrison-Broadley, Col. H.B.
Hay, Hn. Claude George
Hervey,F.W.F.(BurySEdm'ds
Houston, Robert Paterson
Hunt, Roland
Kennaway, Rt Hn.Sir John H.
Kenyon-Slaney,Rt.Hon.ColW
Kimber, Sir Henry
Legge, Col.Hon. Heneage
Long,Col.CharlesW.(Evesham
Lowe, Sir Francis William
MacIver, David (Liverpool)
Morpeth, Viscount
Nield, Herbert
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
PeaseHerbertPike(Darlington
Percy, Earl
Rawlinson, John Frederick P.
Remnant, James Farquharson
Roberts, S (Sheffield, Ecclesall
Rothschild,Hon.Lionel Walter
Scott, Sir S. (Marylebone, W.
Smith,Abel H.(Hertford, East
Smith, Hon. W.F.D. (Strand)
Starkey, John R.
Talbot,RtHn.J.G.(Oxf'dUniv.
Thomson,W.Mitchell (Lanark
Thornton, Percy M.
Turnour, Viscount
Walker,Col.W.H.(Lancashire
Walrond, Hon. Lionel
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Wilson, A. Stanley (York,E.R
Wortley, Rt. Hn. C.B. Stuart-
Younger, George

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Viscount Helmsley and Mr. Hicks Beach.

Question put accordingly, and agreed to.

Bill committed to the Standing Committee on Trade, etc.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Order for Second Reading read, and discharged.

Bill withdrawn.

POST OFFICE SERVANTS.

The Select Committee on Post Office Servants was nominated of: Mr. Barker, Mr. Frank Edwards, Mr. Claude Hay, Sir Clement Hill, Mr. Hobhouse, Mr. Meehan, Mr. Sutherland, Mr. John Ward, and Mr. Wardle.—(*Mr. George Whiteley.*)

EDUCATION(PROVISION OF MEALS) BILL

The Select Committee on the Education (Provision of Meals) Bill was nominated of: Mr. Bridgeman, Sir William Collins, Captain Craig, Sir Henry Craik, Sir John Dickson-Poynder, Mr. Henderson, Mr. Lough, Dr. Macnamara, Mr. M'Kean, Mr. Nolan, Mr. W. E. B. Priestley, Sir Francis Sharp Powell, Mr. Herbert Roberts, Mr. Trevelyan, and Mr. Whitbread.

Ordered, That the Committee have power to send for persons, papers, and records.

Ordered, That Five be the quorum of the Committee.—(*Mr. George Whiteley.*)

Whereupon Mr. Speaker adjourned the House without Question put, in pursuance of Standing Order No. 3.

Adjourned at fourteen minutes before Six o'clock till Monday next.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Monday, 12th March, 1906.

AIRTH PEERAGE

Petition of Robert Barclay-Allardice Barclay-Allardice for leave to refer in his printed case to the documents put in and other evidence adduced in the proceedings on the Petitioner's grandfather's and mother's claims respectively, and to found upon the same before their Lordships and their Committee for privileges as evidence in support of the claim of the Petitioner in so far as their Lordships may think fit to accept the same; read, and ordered as prayed.

Several Lords took the Oath

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

The LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House that the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the Certificate from the Examiners that the Standing Orders applicable to the following Bill have been complied with:—Scottish Union and National Insurance Company—(Substituted Bill.)

And also the Certificate that the further Standing Orders applicable to the following Bill have been complied with:—North Sussex Gas and Water [H.L.]

The same were ordered to lie on the Table.

Alexander (Newport and South Wales) Docks and Railway Bill [H.L.]; Channel Ferry Railway and Quay (Dover) Bill [H.L.]; West Yorkshire Tramways Bill [H.L.]; Folkestone, Sandgate, and Hythe Tramways (No. 1) Bill [H.L.]

Folkestone, Sandgate and Hythe Tramways (No. 2.) Bill [H.L.]. Heacham Water Bill; London County Council (Tramways and Improvements) Bill; London United Tramways Bill; Middlesex County Council (Tramways) Bill; Romford and District Tramways Bill. Examiners' Certificates of non-compliance with the Standing Orders referred to the Standing Orders Committee on Monday next.

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

Folkestone, Sandgate, and Hythe Tramways (No. 1.) Bill [H.L.]. Presented, read 1ª; and referred to the Examiners.

Folkestone Sandgate, and Hythe Tramways (No. 2.) Bill [H.L.], Presented, and read 1ª.

County of Durham Electric Power Supply Bill [H.L.]; Newcastle-upon-Tyne Electric Supply Bill [H.L.]. Read 2ª, and committed. The Committees to be proposed by the Committee of Selection.

Knott End Railway (Extension of Time) Bill [H.L.]. Read 2ª, and committed.

Railway Clearing System (Superannuation Fund) Bill [H.L.]. Read 2ª, and committed. The Committee to be proposed by the Committee of Selection.

Havana United Railways and Regla Warehouses Bill [H.L.]; Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway (Superannuation Fund) Bill [H.L.]. Read 2ª, and committed.

Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway Bill [H.L.]; Crediton Lighting and Power Bill [H.L.]; Cardiff Railway Bill [H.L.]; Great Western and Rhymney Railway Companies Bill [H.L.]; Southport and Lytham Tramroad (Extension of Time) Bill [H.L.]; Buenos Ayres Grand National Tramways Bill [H.L.]; Great Northern (Ireland) and Midland Railways Bill [H.L.]; Portsmouth Water Bill [H.L.]; Truro Gas Bill [H.L.]; Read 2ª, and committed. The Committee to be proposed by the Committee of Selection.

Cambrian Railways Bill [H.L.]; Barry Railway Bill [H.L.]; Read 2ª, and committed. The Committees to be proposed by the Committee of Selection.

North Sussex Gas and Water Bill [H.L.]; Read 2ª, and committed.

Vauclain's Patent Bill [H.L.]; Read 2ª (according to order), and committed.

Thames Harbour Bill [H.L.]; The Chairman of Committees informed the House that the Promoters do not intend to proceed further with the Bill; Order for the Second Reading on Thursday next discharged; Ordered that the Bill be not further proceeded with.

Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire Tramways Bill [H.L.] The Chairman of Committees informed the House that the opposition to the Bill was withdrawn. The Orders made on Thursday last discharged, and Bill committed.

RETURNS REPORTS ETC.

SCOTCH EDUCATION DEPARTMENT.

Code of Regulations for Day Schools, 1906; with Appendices.

TRADE REPORTS.—(ANNUAL SERIES).

No. 3535. Netherlands (Trade and Navigation of the Port of Amsterdam).

No. 3536. United States (Finances of the United States for the year ended 30th June, 1905).

AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS (IRELAND), 1905 (MIGRATORY LABOURERS)

Report and tables relating to Irish migratory, agricultural, and other labourers for the year 1905.

Presented (by command), and ordered to lie on the Table.

POLLING DISTRICTS (COUNTY COUNCILS) BILL. [H. L.]

[SECOND READING.]

Order of the Day for the Second Reading read.

LORD MONKSWELL: My Lord, this Bill proposes to remedy an obvious defect in the law. As the law now stands, in the case of county council elections there is only a power to settle polling districts once for all, while in the case of Parliamentary elections there is power to settle the districts from time to time according to convenience and the conditions of the particular neighbourhood. It is very necessary that the alteration in the law proposed by this Bill should take place. Many inconveniences result from there being no power to alter the polling districts in the case of county councils. This Bill gives that power and I cannot imagine that there will be any opposition to it. I beg to move the Second Reading.

Moved, that the Bill be now read 2^a. (*Lord Monkswell.*)

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF AGRICULTURE AND FISHERIES (Earl CARRINGTON): My Lords, I have been asked by my right hon. friend the President of the Local Government Board to inform the noble Lord that there is no opposition whatever to his Bill. His Majesty's Government entirely approve of it, and are very glad to give it their support.

THE MARQUESS OF LONDONDERRY: I should like to ask my noble friend whether there is any difference between this Bill and the one which passed through all its stages in your Lordships' House last session.

LORD MONKSWELL: No; this is the same Bill. It has passed your Lordships' House four times.

On Question, Bill read 2^a.

Committed to a Committee of the Whole House to-morrow.

POLLING ARRANGEMENTS (PARLIAMENTARY BOROUGHS) BILL [H.L.].

[SECOND READING.]

Order of the day for the Second Reading read.

LORD MONKSWELL: My Lords, this is a Bill to abolish an inconvenient anomaly in the law. By the Local Government Act of 1888, the jurisdiction of the justices in quarter sessions to settle polling districts for counties was thrown on county councils, but at the same time, the jurisdiction of the justices in petty sessions for the same purpose was retained. The effect of that is, that in all the county districts the county council is the authority; but with regard to Parliamentary boroughs the county council is not always the authority. Where a Parliamentary borough is solely within one petty sessional district, the power still resides with the justices. The justices do not in the least wish to keep up their jurisdiction, and it is eminently desirable that there should be as few authorities as possible to settle this matter. This Bill, like the one your Lordships have just read a Second time, has passed this House on no fewer than four occasions, but it has never made progress in the House of Commons. I believe the reason for that is that they are non-contentious measures. It is extremely difficult to get the House of Commons to take the slightest interest in any measure that is not acutely contentious. In the other House what everybody wants nobody wants. It requires a great deal of driving power to get Bills of this description passed, and I earnestly hope that His Majesty's Government will take them up and endeavour to get them through the House of Commons.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2a."—(*Lord Monkswell.*)

EARL BEAUCHAMP: My Lords, I have to say, on behalf of the Home Office, that there is no opposition to this Bill.

On Question, Bill read 2a.

Committed to a Committee of the whole House to-morrow.

OFFICE OF THE GENTLEMAN USHER OF THE BLACK ROD.

THE CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES (The Earl of ONSLOW): My Lords, I beg to move the addition of the Earl of Camperdown to the Select Committee on the office of the Gentleman Usher of the Black Rod.

Moved, "That the Earl of Camperdown be added to the Select Committee."—(*The Earl of Onslow.*)

THE LORD PRIVY SEAL (The Marquess of RIPON): My Lords, I entirely concur in the noble Earl's Motion. Lord Camperdown has taken much interest in this subject, and I am very glad that it is proposed to add his name to the Committee.

On Question, Motion agreed to.

The Earl of Camperdown added to the Select Committee.

House adjourned at Twenty-five minutes before Five o'clock, till To-morrow, half-past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Monday, 12*th March*, 1906.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS (STANDING ORDER 63 COMPLIED WITH).

MR. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, that, in the case of the following Bill, referred on the First Reading thereof, Standing Order 63 has been complied with, viz. :—Mid Oxfordshire Gas Bill.

Ordered, that the Bill be read a second time.

PRIVATE BILLS [LORDS].

MR. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, that, in respect of the following Bill, introduced pursuant to the provisions of the Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899, and which the Chairman of Ways and Means had directed to originate in the House of Lords, they have certified that the Standing Orders have been complied with, viz. :—Scottish Union and National Insurance Company.

Brixham Gas (Electric Lighting) Bill; Cheltenham Gas Bill; London and South Western Railway Bill. Read a second time, and committed.

Rochester, Chatham, and Stroud Gas Bill. Read a second time, and committed.

PETITIONS.

LAND VALUES (ASSESSMENT AND RATING) BILL.

Petition from Ventnor, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

PUBLIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS (RELIGIOUS TEACHING).

Petitions against alteration of Law; From Childerditch; Scorton (two); and, Thistleton; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

INTERMEDIATE EDUCATION (IRELAND).

Paper [presented 9th March] to be printed. [No. 83.]

EAST INDIA (MINERAL CONCESSIONS).

Return presented, relative thereto [Address 9th March; *Mr. Charles Schwann*]; to lie upon the Table.

COLONIAL REPORTS (ANNUAL).

Copy presented, of Colonial Reports, No. 481 (Ceylon, Annual Report for 1904) [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS (IRELAND) (MIGRATORY LABOURERS).

Copy presented, of Report and Tables relating to Irish Migratory Agricultural and other Labourers for the year 1905 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

EDUCATION (SCOTLAND) (CODE 1906).

Copy presented, of Code of Regulations for Day Schools, 1906, with Appendices [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).

Copies presented, of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Annual Series, Nos. 3535 and 3536 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

PAPER LAID UPON THE TABLE BY THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE.

Inquiry into Charities (County of Wilts). Further Return relative thereto [ordered 9th August 1901; *Mr. Griffith-Boscawen*]; to be printed. [No. 84.]

DIPLOMATIC REPORTS (COAL).

Return ordered, "of Extracts relating to Coal from the Reports received up to the present date from His Majesty's Diplomatic and Consular Officers Abroad for 1904 and 1905, or from such Reports received since the date of the similar Return issued in October 1904 (Parliamentary Paper, No. 343, of Session 1904)."—(*Mr. Fenwick.*)

NATIONAL SCHOOLS (IRELAND).

Return ordered, "showing (1) the number of National Schools in each county in Ireland in which, according to the latest Returns, Irish is taught as an extra subject, third year's course; (2) the number of National Schools in each county in Ireland in which, according to the latest Returns, Irish is taught as an extra subject, second year's course; (3) the number of National Schools in each county in Ireland in which, according to the latest Returns, Irish is taught as an extra subject, first year's course; (4) the number of National Schools in each county in Ireland in which Irish is taught as an ordinary subject; and (5) the number of Intermediate Schools in each county in Ireland in which Irish is taught (a) in the preparatory grade; (b) in the junior grade; (c) in the middle grade; (d) in the senior grade."—(*Mr. Nannetti.*)

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Sale of Lands Charged with Loans for Piers and Harbours.

Mr. THOMAS O'DONNELL (Kerry, W.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether on the sale of lands charged with the repayment of loans for piers and harbours, steps will be taken to have the lands given over to the tenants free from those charges, in accordance with the spirit of the Act of 1903.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) I am informed by the Land Commission that, in cases of purchase of lands upon which loans for piers and harbours are charged on the vendor's interest, the loans are redeemed out of the purchase-money. If, however, the Question is intended to refer to maintenance rates, in respect of works of the kind mentioned, such rates are, as a rule, not redeemable.

Railway and Harbour Guarantees Paid by Kerry Ratepayers.

Mr. THOMAS O'DONNELL: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, what is the total amount paid by the ratepayers of Kerry, from 31st March, 1895, to 31st March, 1905, for railway and harbour guarantees;

what is the total amount paid by the barony of Corkaguiny in the same period; what is the total valuation of the county and of the barony; what is the total amount paid by the county and by this barony for the same purposes in the year ended March, 1905, and what does it average per pound in the valuation of the whole county and of the barony; and whether he will state if there is any other barony in Ireland rated so highly for those purposes.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The total amount which was paid by the ratepayers of Kerry, from 31st March, 1895, to 31st March, 1905, for railway and harbour guarantees is £165,458 13s. 5d. The total amount similarly paid by the barony of Corkaguiny is £31,575 17s. 2d. The total valuation of the county for the year to 31st March, 1905, is £308,445 5s., and of the barony £26,110 18s. The total amount paid by the county for the same purposes during the year ended March, 1905, is £11,932 4s. 8d., the average rate per pound on the valuation being 9·32d. The amount similarly paid by the barony is £2,365 5s. 8d., an average of 21·87d. on its valuation. In all these cases deductions have been made of amounts received for refund under Section 58 (4), Local Government (Ireland) Act, 1898. The Local Government Board believe that no other barony is rated so highly for the purposes mentioned.

Extension of Railway from Clonakilty to Glandore.

MR. EDWARD BARRY (Cork County, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the harbour of Glandore is one of the most important fishing stations on the south coast of Ireland; whether vessels from all parts of the Kingdom land fish there, but are inconvenienced by the fact that the fish has to be taken by car for a distance of about twelve miles, thus causing injury to the fish as well as delay in reaching the English market; and whether steps will be taken to connect this important fishing station by rail with Clonakilty.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) Both Glandore and Union Hall, which are situated on opposite sides of Glandore Harbour, are important centres for fishing, Union Hall being the more important town. It would doubtless serve the fishing industry if railway communication with Glandore Harbour were effected, but it would be a question for consideration whether connection with the main line at Skibbereen or with the light railway at Clonakilty would be the more suitable for the purpose. I understand that there are no funds at present available for the extension of light railways in Ireland, but, in the event of funds becoming available for the purpose, the claims of this district will be considered.

Working of Benduff Slate Quarries.

MR. EDWARD BARRY: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will ask the Department of Agriculture to send an inspector to visit the slate quarries at Benduff, Roscarbery, county Cork, to report on the quality of the slate and the possibility of further development, giving special attention to the disadvantage under which the quarries at present suffer, owing to the fact that they are over ten miles from the nearest railway station; whether, seeing that those quarries at one time gave employment to over 200 men, and would do so again with proper railway and other facilities, steps will be taken to have an investigation of the needs and possibilities of the district.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The Benduff slate quarry was inspected in May, 1904, by the Department's economic geologist, in compliance with an application made to them by the managing director of the quarry. The report of the inspection was communicated to the managing director for his information.

Building of Fishing Smacks and making of Nets in Ireland.

MR. THOMAS O'DONNELL: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will state how many places there are in Ireland for the building of fishing smacks and for the manufacture of fishing nets; whether he can state how many fishing smacks and nets used by Irish fishermen are of Irish manufacture; whether application has been made by representative men in Dingle for the establishment of a net-making industry there; and whether, considering the number of persons employed in the industry in the district, and the amount of money which is sent abroad, steps will be taken by the Department of Agriculture to help in establishing the industry there.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The Department of Agriculture understand that fishing smacks have been or can be built at about a dozen places in Ireland, and that net manufactories on a large scale exist in at least three places. Net-making by hand is also carried on at fishing villages. The Department have no information as to the number of Irish-made fishing smacks and nets used by Irish fishermen. The question of starting a net-making industry at Dingle has been brought before the Department, and a promise has been made that if such a project should take practical shape the Department would give all possible assistance.

Main Roads in County Antrim.

Mr. GLENDINNING (Antrim, N.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the fact that the Local Government Board are about to reinstate the original scheme of main roads in county Antrim; that in this they are acting against public opinion; and that the county council rejected main roads by a large majority; and whether, in the interest of outlying districts, who are compelled to pay for the up-keep of roads they never use, he will take steps to secure that main roads should be abolished.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) 1. After careful consideration of the evidence adduced at the local inquiry, the Local Government Board have decided to reinstate the original scheme of main roads in county Antrim. 2. The county council, by a majority of seventeen to nine, resolved to have no main roads in future, but there were appeals from five district councils against this decision. There is some doubt as to the legality of a declaration to the effect that no roads should be main roads. 3. There are no means of apportioning the charge for road maintenance upon the basis of user of the roads. Where, as in Belfast rural district, road maintenance is expensive owing to a large volume of the rough traffic passing to and from a great business centre, the whole burden cannot equitably be imposed upon the ratepayers of the district immediately adjoining such centre, and as a remedy the Local Government Act of 1898, Section 8, provides for a moiety of the cost being distributed over the whole county.

Retention of Temporary Manager of Lislea National School.

Mr. LONSDALE (Armagh, Mid.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Commissioners of National Education will give reasons for retaining the present temporary manager of the Lislea national school in opposition to the wishes of the people of the district, as evidenced by the memorial praying for his removal, which was sent to the Commissioners two years ago; whether he will state the date of the last visit made by the temporary manager to the school; and whether his appointment is in conformity with Rule 44 (e).

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) I am informed by the Commissioners of National Education that they appointed the Reverend Mr. Simpson as temporary manager of this school pending the appointment of a new minister of Drumhillery church, who, in the ordinary course, would be appointed manager of the school as his predecessor was. A new minister has not yet been appointed, and in the meantime the existing arrangement has worked satisfactorily, and the Commissioners do not intend to alter it until a new minister is appointed. The last visit of Mr. Simpson of which the Commissioners have a record took place on 18th October last, but a local gentleman visits the school on Mr. Simpson's behalf. The rule to which the hon. Member intends to refer appears to be rule 40 (e). The Commissioners have not furnished me with any observations on the final inquiry of the Question; but it would appear that any question as to the observance by the Commissioners of their own rules is a matter for their own decision.

Sale of Synan Estate, County Limerick.

MR. LUNDON (Limerick, E.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland can he say in what way the Synan Estate, in Carnane, in the parish of Fedamore, county Limerick, stands; in which of the courts is the case at present; has the conditional order for its sale, made long before August last, as yet been made absolute; can he say whether he can assist, through the Estates Commissioners or otherwise, in facilitating the portioning of this estate for the benefit of the labourers and small farmers on the small holdings around.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) I am informed by the Registrar of the Land Judge's Court that the matter of the estate referred to is before that court, and that the conditional order for sale has not yet been made absolute. The solicitor who is in charge of the proceedings for sale is at present negotiating with the owners with a view to having the proceedings in the Land Judge's Court dismissed, in order that the sale may be carried out through the Land Commission. If these negotiations should prove ineffective the solicitor intends, as soon as may be possible, to apply that the conditional order be made absolute.

Treatment of John Fallon in Galway Gaol.

MR. DUFFY (Galway, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the correspondence between Dr. Comyn, solicitor for Patrick Ryan, Michael Green, Michael Healy, and John Fallon, prisoners in Galway Gaol, awaiting trial, for having, as alleged, fired at Mr. and Mrs. Shaw Taylor on the 2nd December, and the Prisons' Board; whether he is aware that Dr. Comyn has complained both to the local prison officials and the General Prisons Board of the isolation of John Fallon from the other prisoners, who are allowed to exercise together, whereas even in chapel he is not allowed to see them; and whether he will direct that Fallon be now treated as are the other three prisoners in the case.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The Answer to the first and second inquiries of the Question is in the affirmative. The action taken by the prison governor in this case is in accordance with the prison rules, which direct that prisoners awaiting trial shall be kept separate and not permitted to communicate with each other. I am informed that matters occurred in the prison which necessitated a strict observance of the rule in the case of Fallon.

Reinstatement of Evicted Tenants in County Clare.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he can state how many evicted tenants are in county Clare; and whether he will see, in the interests of peace and good feeling in Ireland, that every effort is made for the reinstatement of all evicted tenants on fair and reasonable terms.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The Estates Commissioners inform me that they have received 203 applications for reinstatement from evicted tenants in county Clare. The Commissioners are about to make inquiries into the circumstances of all such applicants, and they are doing all in their power, under the provisions of the law, to proceed with the reinstatement of evicted tenants.

Irish Estate—Uneconomic Holdings.

MR. JOHN ROCHE (Galway, E.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Congested Districts Board will consider the advisability of supplying the needs of tenants of uneconomic holdings in the neighbourhood of estates acquired by the Board, before importing people from a considerable distance.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The Congested Districts Board will always favourably consider the claims of tenants with uneconomic holdings on and near estates purchased by them, but the Board cannot be bound to give all that neighbouring tenants may ask, without regard to the general needs of persons elsewhere, and whose migration it may be necessary to arrange.

Sales of the Culthurst and Skerrick Estate.

MR. SHEEHAN (Cork County, Mid.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he has received a resolution from the Macroom rural district council, requesting the Estates Commissioners to have the cases of the Colthurst and Skerrick tenantry, in which a dead-lock exists in the negotiations for purchase, and where extreme measures have been resorted to by the landlord, investigated with a view to a friendly settlement, and also setting forth that an inspection of the holdings in these cases is desirable for the purpose of fixing the terms of purchase, and otherwise facilitating a sale of the estates; and will he state what steps are being taken to comply with the request contained in this resolution.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The Estates Commissioners inform me that they have not received the resolution referred to, but they have been approached with regard to the estate of Sir George Colthurst, in the neighbourhood of Macroom, with a view to their intervening to bring about a settlement and sale, and they are in correspondence with the owner on the subject.

Irish Farmers and Importation of Foreign Cattle.

MR. EDWARD BARRY (Cork County, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether farmers who purchased their holdings on the basis of prices till now ruling for store cattle, and on the immunity from foot-and-mouth and other contagious diseases consequent on the exclusion of foreign cattle, which, if permitted to land, may contain latent germs of undeveloped disease, are to be held to those bargains and compelled to pay their annuities, if by any action of the Government their principal industry is materially injured; and whether steps will be taken to secure a continuance of the conditions under which the purchasers undertook to meet their obligations to the State.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The points raised in the Question are matters for argument which cannot be discussed within the limits of an Answer to a Question; but the considerations mentioned by the hon. Member are, together with others, of course, present to the mind of the Government.

Position of Telegraph Learners.

MR. SEAVERNS (Lambeth, Brixton): To ask the Postmaster-General if he will state what steps have been taken by him to regulate and improve the position of telegraph learners.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton*): I am glad to announce that I have been able to carry out a scheme which will materially improve the position of telegraph learners. The details of the scheme as regards the pay have been published to the staff in the Post Office Circular, a copy of which I will furnish to the hon. Member.

Discharges from Portsmouth Dockyard.

MR. GEORGE ROBERTS (Norwich): To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether he will state the number of mechanics, of all classes, and labourers who have been discharged from the Portsmouth Dockyard during the present financial year, also the number of skilled labourers who have been reduced in status and wages, together with the number of officials who have been affected during the same period.

(*Answered by Mr. Edmund Robertson.*) The number of mechanics, of all classes, and labourers who have been discharged from Portsmouth Dockyard during the present financial year is as follows:—

Causes of discharge.	Mechanics.	Labourers.		Total.
		Skilled.	Ordinary.	
On reduction - - -	522	611	399	1,562
By request - - -	54	17	29	100
Age and infirmity - -	99	86	28	213
Losing time - - -	14	10	8	32
Misconduct - - -	10	2	8	20
Death and other causes -	38	10	7	55
Total - -	767	736	479	1,982

The number of skilled labourers who have been reduced in status and wages is 338; of these 195 were reinstated as skilled labour became available. The number of officials reduced who have been affected during the same period is 48, viz.:—38 chargemen, 5 recorders, 3 inspectors, and 2 foremen.

Subsidies for Carriage of Mails and Fish in Scotland.

MR. CATHCART WASON (Orkney and Shetland): To ask the Secretary for Scotland whether he will state what subsidies are paid by the Scottish Office, the Scottish Fishery Board, or by the Congested Districts Board, towards the carriage of mails or fish in the highlands and islands in Scotland; and if, in view of the difficulty Shetland experiences in getting winter fish to market, owing to the inadequacy of the mail service, assistance of a similar nature will be given there.

(*Answered by Mr. Sinclair.*) No such subsidies are paid towards the carriage of mails or fish. The question of a grant from the Congested Districts Board for the improvement of the Shetland mail service was proposed in 1903 and dismissed as impracticable. The Congested Districts Board have given a limited guarantee for a brief period, which expires in April, for the conveyance of fish from the west coast of Sutherland and Ross, as an experiment, but the wants and conditions of these districts are hardly comparable to those of Shetland.

Letters and Parcels passing through Lerwick Post Office.

MR. CATHCART WASON: To ask the Postmaster-General if he will state the number of letters inwards and outwards, and parcels inwards and outwards, at Lerwick post office during the year ending 31st December, 1905, and the corresponding numbers for the year ending 31st December, 1890.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) The numbers of letters and parcels dealt with in the Lerwick post office are as follows:—Year ended 31st December, 1890. Letters delivered, 826,486; Letters posted, 710,320; Parcels delivered, 24,219; Parcels posted, 23,036. Year ended 31st December, 1905. Letters delivered, 1,689,636; Letters posted, 1,209,260; Parcels delivered, 86,143; Parcels posted, 75,920.

Sanitary Condition of Clones Railway Postal Telegraph Office.

Mr. SLOAN (Belfast, S.): To ask the Postmaster-General, if he will state when the promised alterations to the postal telegraph office at Clones railway station will be carried out and the office put in a sanitary condition for the mixed staff working there.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) I have not received complaint in regard to the sanitary conditions of the postal telegraph office at Clones railway station; but I have called for a Report.

Special Rates for Betting Telegrams.

Mr. SLOAN: To ask the Postmaster-General if betting persons belonging to clubs have special arrangements over traders for communicating news by telegraph; whether he is aware that a dealer in bread or meat would pay £2 1s. 8d. for 100 words to each of ten customers, and that these betting persons can use the national wires, addresses free, for messages of the same length for 2s. 6d. day or night; and, if so, will he explain why this preference is given.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) Clubs are, under Section 16 of the Telegraph Act of 1868, entitled to the benefit of the very low telegraph rates accorded to Press messages; and I have no power to discriminate against a legitimate club because it is used by betting persons. I propose to consider whether the section ought not to be amended in certain respects.

Pentonville Prison Warders—Requests for Leave.

Mr. RADFORD (Islington, E.): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether he is aware that on the occasion of the visit of Inspector Pennythorne to His Majesty's prison at Pentonville, on 7th and 8th February, several officers fell out in accordance with the regulations and made certain complaints to the inspector; whether any official action has resulted; and whether any, and, if so, what steps have been taken to deal with such complaints.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Gladstone.*) On the occasion referred to, four or five warders submitted a request for the grant of leave on account of their detention beyond ordinary hours on escort duty. The inspector explained to them the rule in force by which, except in special circumstances, either an allowance in money or equivalent leave is given, but not both, and the matter was understood to have ended there.

Dublin Museum—Report of Board of Visitors.

Mr. CAMPBELL (Dublin University): To ask the Secretary to the Treasury, why the Reports of the Board of Visitors and the Director of the Dublin Museum for the year ending 31st March, 1905, have not yet been laid before Parliament.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) I am requested by my hon. friend the Secretary to the Treasury to answer this Question. The Reports in question will be published in the Fifth Annual Report of the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction, which is in the Press and will shortly be presented to Parliament. The preceding year's Report was presented in May of last year.

Recommendations of Departmental Committee on Forestry.

Mr. MUNRO FERGUSON (Leith Burghs): To ask the hon. Member for South Somerset, as representing the President of the Board of Agriculture, whether the Board of Agriculture, or any other Department, intends to take any steps to carry out the recommendations of the Departmental Committee on Forestry, 1902.

(*Answered by Sir Edward Strachey.*) It will be seen from our journal that much has already been done by the Board and by the Commissioners of Woods and Forests to give effect to the recommendations of the Committee, and I believe that the labours of the Committee and the action subsequently taken are likely to be attended with very satisfactory results so far as the development of British foresty, both in England and Scotland, is concerned. We should be very willing, however, to consider any suggestions with which my hon. friend may favour us as to the direction in which a further advance may be made.

"Faking" of Hams, Butter and Eggs.

MR. JOYCE (Limerick): To ask the hon. Member for South Somerset, as representing the President of the Board of Agriculture, whether his attention has been called to cases of faking hams in Ireland and butter and eggs in England; and, if so, will he say what action, if any, has been taken in the matter.

(*Answered by Sir Edward Strachey.*) No representations have been addressed to the board as to the "faking" of hams or eggs, but if the hon. Member will communicate to me any detailed information which he may possess I shall be happy to cause inquiries to be made. With regard to butter, I would remind the hon. Member that a Select Committee of the House has been appointed to inquire into the whole subject.

Dockyard Discharges—Age Limit of Men and Officials.

MR. GEORGE ROBERTS: To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether the age limit is equally applicable to officials and men in dockyards when it is found necessary to curtail expenses; if not will he state the reasons why such age limit operates in the case of men and not officials.

(*Answered by Mr. Edmund Robertson.*) In carrying out the recent discharges, which were the cause and not the consequence of the reduced expenditure on the staffs of the royal dockyards, the age limit was applied equally to officials and men. Both as regards officials and men, extension of time was allowed in individual cases to permit of time for pension or gratuity being completed.

Report of Admiral Sir A. Douglas's Committee.

MR. BELLAIRS (Lynn Regis): To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty when he anticipates that the Report of Admiral Sir A. Douglas's Committee will be laid upon the Table.

(*Answered by Mr. Edmund Robertson.*) The Report will be presented as soon as ready.

Increased Wages in Dockyards—Provision in the Estimates.

MR. GARDNER (Berkshire, Wokingham): To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty if provision is made in the Naval Estimates, circulated on March 1st, for the increased wages in dockyards as foreshadowed in his statement; and, if so, what amount of money is involved.

(*Answered by Mr. Edmnud Robertson*). No special provision has been made.

Anglo-French Agreement with the New Hebrides.

SIR GILBERT PARKER (Gravesend): To ask the hon. Member for Dewsbury, as representing the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, if he will lay upon the Table of the House the terms of the Anglo-French Agreement with the New Hebrides.

(*Answered by Mr. Runciman.*) The Agreement being in the nature of a Draft Convention *ad referendum* it would be premature to lay it before it has been fully considered by the two Governments interested.

Arrest of Three Young Men at Kilcoonan, County Galway.

MR. DUFFY (Galway, S.): To ask Mr. Attorney-General for Ireland whether he is aware that three respectable young men from Kilcoonan parish, Clarenbridge, county Galway, were arrested on February 19th, on the charge of having fired into the house of a Mr. Kearney; and whether, seeing that the police have failed to produce any evidence connecting them with the crime, and in view of the length of time they are now under remand, he will direct that the prisoners be released from prison.

(*Answered by Mr. Cherry.*) The three young men referred to were arrested on February 27th last, on the charge of having, on the night of February 19th, fired into the dwelling-house of Patrick Kearney, and also of having attacked and broken windows in the dwelling-house of Honoria Fitzgerald at Ballindereen. They were brought up at petty sessions on March 6th and remanded until the 13th inst. The remand was usual in such cases and necessary for the proper preparation of the case against the accused. There has been no unnecessary delay. It is not in my power to direct that prisoners under such circumstances should be released from prison. An application can be made on their behalf, either to the magistrates or to the King's Bench Division, that they be released on bail.

Day Taining Colleges Attached to University Colleges.

SIR G. KEKEWICH (Exeter): To ask the President of the Board of Education whether he is aware that the authorities of the day training colleges attached to University Colleges are strongly opposed to the proposals of the Board made in the last paragraph of Circular 530, issued in July 1905; whether the changes there proposed would prevent, to a considerable extent, the day students from attending the University College classes and from proceeding to a degree, and tend to segregate them from the University students; and whether he will consider whether the changes are educationally desirable, and should be maintained.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) My attention has been called to this matter, and the Board have just issued a letter stating their position in the matter, a copy of which I will send to the hon. Member. The Board have no desire to prevent suitable students from attending University college classes, or to segregate them from other students.

Deduction from Grants to Residential Training Colleges.

SIR G. KEKEWICH: To ask the President of the Board of Education whether deductions have been made from the grants to residential training colleges during the past year at the rate of one-fourteenth of a £1 for every day's absence of a male student and one-twenty-first of a £1 for every day's absence of a female student; whether any notice was given to the authorities of the colleges that such deduction would be made; whether there is any authority for the proceeding in any published document issued by the Board; and what is the total sum that has been deducted from the grants.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The hon. Member has misunderstood the regulation in question, which is not as stated in the Question, but is that a deduction of £1 is made for each complete fortnight in the case of men, and complete three weeks in the case of women. The rule is a continuation, only in a less drastic form, of a rule which has always existed, and is amply justified by paragraphs 56 (v.) and (vi.) of the regulations. It did not appear necessary to make any general announcement of the modification of the rule. The total sum deducted under this rule is £260. The Board have consented to receive a deputation on this and other subjects from the principals of training colleges.

Cost of Lunches for Children in Berlin Schools.

MR. L. HASLAM (Monmouth Boroughs): To ask the President of the Board of Education what is the approximate cost per child of the lunches provided for children attending the elementary schools in Berlin; what percentage of the children are considered necessitous, and therefore receive the lunches free of cost; how long has the system of providing free meals been instituted in Berlin; and are the authorities satisfied that the system of free meals is economical and advantageous to the welfare of the community.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The system has been in force now for about twenty years; all the meals given are free, but I have no information as to their cost, nor as to whether the authorities are satisfied with the system.

Dismissal of Miss Turner by Rotherham Borough Council.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN (Kilkenny): To ask the President of the Board of Education whether his attention has been called to the alleged dismissal of a teacher, named Miss Turner, by the

Rotherham borough council, for insubordination, the insubordination consisting of her refusal to remove an engagement ring from her finger when ordered to do so; and, if so, by whom and for what reason was Miss Turner ordered to remove her ring, and is there any rule against female teachers wearing engagement rings; and whether he proposes to take any action in the matter.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The Board have received a letter from Miss Turner drawing their attention to her case. She states that she received the order from one of the mistresses of the pupil teacher centre, at which she is a student. Why she was so ordered she does not state. I am afraid the case is not one in which I have power to intervene.

Subsidy Paid to the Allan Line for Carriage of Mails to Canada.

MR. CHARLES DEVLIN (Galway): To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will state the amount of subsidy paid to the Allan Line for the carrying of mails to Canada; whether the subsidy is paid by His Majesty's Government or by the Canadian authorities; whether any portion of the subsidy is defrayed by His Majesty's Government, and, if so, how much; and whether any other line than the Allan Line is in receipt of a subsidy for the conveyance of mails direct to Canada.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) I am not aware of the amount of the subsidy. The arrangements with the Allan Line are made by the Canadian authorities; and no portion of the subsidy is paid direct by His Majesty's Government. The payment for the conveyance of mails from the United Kingdom sent by the service in question is made to the Canadian Post Office under the ordinary arrangements of the Postal Union. His Majesty's Government does not pay a subsidy to any shipping company for the conveyance of mails directly to Canada.

Present Remuneration and Former Occupation of Inspectors and Judges under the Cattle Breeding Schemes of the Irish Department of Agriculture.

MR. MEEHAN (Queen's County, Leix): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will give a Return of the number, amount of salary, travelling and other allowances, former occupation of the inspectors and judges appointed under the cattle-breeding schemes of the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction, Ireland; how many of such inspectors and judges are themselves or immediate friends concerned in breeding the class of animals scheduled under the cattle-breeding scheme of the Department; and whether he proposes to take any action to reduce the temptation to persons so interested to condemn animals as frequently as possible, so as to create a demand for the stock which they are personally interested in raising.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) Inspection in connection with the Department's cattle-breeding schemes is carried out mainly by three permanent agricultural inspectors employed by the Department, none of whom are engaged in cattle breeding. The salaries of these gentlemen are borne on the Votes, and they receive the usual travelling and subsistence allowances. In Spring one additional inspector is temporarily employed when the work of the schemes is pressing. He is paid at the rate of two guineas per day for each day actually engaged on the work of inspection, together with a maintenance allowance of 15s. for a period of twenty-four hours absence from home on the business of the Department, as well as first-class railway expenses. This inspector is a breeder of pure-bred shorthorn cattle, but he is employed by the Department only for districts remote from where he lives. The Department do not believe there can be any temptation to act in the manner suggested in the Question, seeing that the demand for premium bulls has hitherto far exceeded the supply.

Accommodation for Labourers on the Balrothery Estate.

MR. CLANCY (Dublin County, N.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been drawn to a Resolution of the Balrothery (county Dublin) Rural District Council, stating that in the cases of estates purchased in the Balrothery Union, under the Land Act of 1903, no effect has been given to Section 96 of that Act by providing accommodation for labourers; and what reply have the Estates Commissioners to make to this Resolution.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The Estates Commissioners have received a copy of the Resolution referred to. They inform me that two estates only in this union have been purchased by the Land Commission, and that in both cases, in their opinion, there is already sufficient accommodation for labourers in the locality.

Irish Tenders for Supplies to Irish Boards of Guardians.

MR. CHARLES DEVLIN: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the Local Government Board has written to the Galway Board of Guardians, remonstrating with them, because in the matter of medicine contracts the board of guardians thought well to only consider tenders from Irish firms; and whether it is the intention of the Local Government Board to throw obstacles in the way of Irish boards of guardians encouraging Irish manufactures.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The Local Government Board, having become aware that certain boards of guardians had adopted Resolutions that medicine contracts should be confined to Irish firms, have recently addressed a circular letter to all boards of guardians in Ireland pointing out how very detrimental such a restriction would be to the interests of the ratepayers, for whom the guardians act as trustees, and possibly to Irish industry, by provoking action in England unfavourable to Irish tenders for other articles. The circular also pointed out that it is the duty of the Local Government Board to see that no unnecessary charge is placed upon public funds, from which one-half of the expenditure upon medicine contracts is defrayed. It is not, however, the intention of the Local Government Board to place obstacles in the way of the encouragement of Irish manufactures by boards of guardians, so long as they do not neglect the paramount interest of the ratepayers. I may add that the quantity of medicinal drugs actually manufactured in Ireland appears to be small, and that a restriction of contracts to Irish firms would not necessarily tend to encourage the industry. Out of nine Irish firms which hold medicine contracts only two are manufacturing druggists; and even these obtain many of their drugs from England.

Repeal of Section 6 (Sub-section 1) of Local Government Amendment Act (Ireland), 1902.

MR. EDWARD BARRY: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether any steps will be taken to repeal Section 6, Sub-section 1, of The Local Government Amendment Act (Ireland), 1902 (2 Edward 7, c. 38); and whether requests have been received from several unions for the repeal of it on the ground of the loss caused to them.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The object of the section in question was to secure an equitable participation in the Local Taxation Grant by rich and poor unions alike. The subsequent experience of the Local Government Board has, in their opinion, proved that the legislation in question has been beneficial to the poorer unions, by preventing a diminution in the help afforded to them; and, as at present advised, His Majesty's Government do not intend to take any steps for its repeal. The Board have received requests for the repeal of the section from some unions.

Reinstatement of Dennis McCarthy of Milltown, County Kerry.

MR. THOMAS O'DONNELL: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he has received from the Dingle District Council a Resolution asking the Estates Commissioners to intervene with a view to have Mr. Denis McCarthy, of Milltown, Dingle, county Kerry, evicted tenant on the estate of Lord Ventry, reinstated in his holding; whether an inspector will be sent to meet Lord Ventry with a view to arranging sale and reinstatement in this case.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The Estates Commissioners inform me that they have received the Resolution referred to, and that they intend in due course to make enquiries into the case of the evicted tenant in question, as also into the cases of other evicted tenants who have sent in applications.

Allocation of Untenanted Land in Ireland.

MR. GINNELL (Westmeath, N.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, will His Majesty'e Government, in preparing the promised legislation for Irish workers, provide special facilities for allocating untenanted land for this purpose under Section 4 of the Land Act of 1903, and for obtaining money at low interest for the building of cottages on land so allocated; and will the limit of area on such land be widened, the qualification made to include all who do manual work, whether skilled or unskilled, and the allottee enabled to become owner like any other purchaser.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The points raised in this Question will receive careful consideration upon the drafting of the Labourers' Bill which I am to introduce. I am not, however, prepared to make any statement as to the provisions of the Bill pending its introduction.

Destruction of Bridge at Shraheendool County Galway.

MR. CHARLES CRAIG (Antrim, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that a bridge, 18 feet long by 9 feet wide, at Shraheendoo, county Galway, which was the only means of egress of Martin Fahey from his farm to the county road, was destroyed to prevent him from taking his turf to sell in Loughrea; and what steps have been taken by the police to discover and prosecute the offenders.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) I am informed by the police authorities that on the night of the 29th January a wooden bridge at the place mentioned was destroyed, the amount of the damage being about 30s. This bridge, which has since been repaired, is used by Fahey and several other persons. The police have made, and are continuing to make, every effort to discover the offenders.

Firing of Shots at Bookeen, County Galway.

MR. CHARLES CRAIG: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the House of John Monaghan, at Gurtykerin, near Bookeen, county Galway, was fired into on or about 25th January last, and that at Killariff, in the same district, on 2nd January last, shots were fired into the house of Pat Kennedy; whether the police have any information as to who fired these shots; and what steps have been taken to prevent a recurrence of such incidents.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The facts are stated in the first paragraph of the Question. The police have not, so far, succeeded in discovering the offenders. Adequate measures are being taken to secure the safety of the persons whose houses were attacked.

Refusal of Building Grant to School at Islandbawn, County Antrim.

MR. CHARLES CRAIG: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, if he will state the grounds on which the Commissioners of National Education have refused to make a grant towards the building of a new national school at Islandbawn, county Antrim, to take the place of the present building which they have condemned as being too small; whether he is aware that Islandbawn School has been in existence for over fifty years, that the population of the district, in the middle of which the school is situate, has quadrupled in the last ten years and is rapidly increasing, and that if Dunadry was made the centre for a school many of the children who at present use Islandbawn School would have to walk four and five miles to school; and whether, in the event of the Commissioners persisting in their refusal, he will have a special inquiry made as to the necessity of retaining Islandbawn School in its present position.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The Commissioners of National Education inform me that they refused to make a grant in this case because they are clearly of opinion that three schools in the locality in question, of which Islandbawn School is one, require to be superseded by a school centrally situated in relation to the school areas concerned. The Commissioners are aware that the Islandbawn School has been for a long time in existence, and that the population of the locality is increasing. The increase, however, is not taking place in the immediate vicinty of Islandbawn School, and the Commissioners are of opinion that a central school at or near Dunadry would adequately meet the requirements of the district. The Islandbawn School is about three-quarters of a mile from the proposed school at Dunadry, and the Commissioners are satisfied that none of the pupils who attend the former school would be unduly inconvenienced by having to attend at Dunadry. The matter is one for the determination of the Commissioners, and does not call for the interference of the Government.

Distribution of Land to Labourers—Evicted Tenants at Enniskillen.

MR. VINCENT KENNEDY (Cavan, W.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he has received a Resolution from the Enniskillen Rural District Council, No. 2, and the ratepayers of the district, dealing with the question of the labourers. the evicted tenants, and those entitled under 3 Edw. VII., c. 37, Section 2 (1), to distribution of untenanted lands, and whether the request in the resolution that before the final distribution of such land takes place the views of the district council will be consulted by the Estates Commissioners will be granted.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The Estates Commissioners inform me that they have not received the Resolution referred to, but they will give due consideration to any representations which the Enniskillen Rural District Council may make to them.

Tenders for Medical and Surgical Appliances for Irish Poor Law Union.

MR. VINCENT KENNEDY: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he is aware that the Local Government Board are seeking to compel all the Poor Law unions in Ireland to advertise for contracts for medicines and medical and surgical appliances on the 10th March, and in cases where the lowest tender be not accepted the Board now requires to be supplied with the reason for non-acceptance; and will he state if this action has his sanction, and on what account it is taken.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The Local Government Board have fixed the 10th March as the latest day on which tenders for medicine contracts can be lodged throughout Ireland, because, if a uniform date were not fixed, some firms might withhold their tenders until they had ascertained the terms upon which rival firms were tendering in other unions, and this would obviously not be in the interests of the ratepayers. The principle embodied in the Board's regulations requiring guardians to state the reasons for non-acceptance of the lowest tender, when they take such a course, is the same as that which has received the sanction of Parliament in Section 18 of The Loca Government (Ireland) Act, 1902.†

Constitution of Rent Fixing Authority in Ireland.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Louth, N.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he is aware that discontent prevails amongst the farmers in county Louth respecting the decisions of the Sub-Commissioners especially since the Act of 1903 leaves the question of value to a single Sub-Commissioner; whether the Government propose that a tribunal, consisting of a lawyer and a gentleman drawn from the landlord class, shall continue as the rent-fixing authority in Ireland; what are the antecedents and qualifications of the Mr. F. H. Grierson who sits to fix fair rents at Dundalk on 19th March against forty-nine farmers; and what are the antecedents and qualifications of the assessor who would determine the value on any appeal.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) I am informed by the Land Commission that they are not aware of the existence of any discontent on this subject beyond that which it is perhaps natural to expect from disappointed litigants on either side. It is the intention of the Government to watch carefully the operation of the Act of 1903 in all respects, and I am not at present prepared to say that the provisions of that Act in regard to the fixing of rents require amendment. Mr. Grierson's antecedents and qualifications are set forth in Parliamentary Paper 151, of 1902. The assessor who may be appointed to assist in the hearing of any appeal from the decision of the Sub-Commission, of which Mr. Grierson was a member, has not yet been selected.

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† In the case of district councils.

Mr. HALPIN (Clare, W.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the tenant farmers of the county of Clare, having lost confidence in the Land Commissioners to fix fair rents, are applying to the county court judge to fix them, and that the landlords are opposing the tenants in doing so; whether he will introduce a short amendment to the Land Act which will enable tenants to bring their cases before the county court judge; and whether he will state the number of land cases brought before the county court judge for the county of Clare for the past two years ending 1st March 1906.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) I am informed by the Land Commission that, during the two years ending 28th February 1906, 173 applications by tenants to fix fair rents were made to the Civil Bill Court of county Clare, as against 487 applications made to the Land Commission. Of the 173 applications referred to, 91 were transferred to the Land Commission, pursuant to Section 37 (4) of the Land Law Act, 1881. In Ireland, as a whole, applications to the Civil Bill Court are about one-tenth as numerous as those made to the Land Commission. Until the present Government has had more experience of the working of the Land Acts I am not prepared to make any statement as to amending legislation.

Re-instatement of Evicted Tenants in Chapel Street, Boyle, County Roscommon.

Mr. JAMES O'KELLY (Roscommon, N.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that a number of tenants resident in Chapel Street, Boyle, county Roscommon, Ireland, were evicted some twenty years ago by the late Colonel King-Harman from holdings in the vicinity of the town, and that this land has been converted into a grazing ranche let on the eleven months' system; and whether he can now take steps to secure the reinstatement of these evicted tenants.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The Estates Commissioners inform me that they have received applications from six persons resident in Chapel Street, Boyle, claiming reinstatement as tenants who were evicted from the estate referred to. From the particulars furnished, however, the applicants do not appear to have been tenants of holdings to which the Land Law Acts apply, and their cases do not, therefore, come within the provisions of Section 2 (1) (d) of the Act of 1903.

Leitrim Rates in Aid of Works in Cavan Portion of the Union.

Mr. THOMAS SMYTH (Leitrim, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to a resolution adopted at a meeting of the Ballinamore Rural District Council on 22nd January 1906, protesting against the levying of a rate in aid being levied off the county Leitrim portion of the Bawnboy union in respect of works executed in the county Cavan portion of the same union, in pursuance of Section 13 of The Local Government (Ireland) Act, 1898; and whether he will direct the Local Government Board to withhold their assent from such levy, or take such other steps as may be necessary to protect the ratepayers of county Leitrim.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The attention of the Local Government Board has been called to the resolution in question. The Board have no power to alter the incidence of expenditure incurred in pursuance of Section 13 of The Local Government (Ireland) Act, 1898.

Sale of Major French's Cloonyquin Estate.

Mr. JAMES O'KELLY: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether Major French's Cloonyquin estate was sold to the Congested Districts Board about twelve months ago; if so, whether the Board is now prepared to sell the same to the small farmers in the neighbourhood with a view to enlarging their holdings; or whether the Board, failing this, will sell the 450 acres of grass land in the lot to, say, forty respectable young men belonging to the district who are anxious to obtain holdings for themselves.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The Cloonyquin estate, which is situated in a non-congested district, was bought by the Congested Districts Board for the purpose of migrating to it tenants from the congested districts under the Board's charge. It was bought with funds entirely devoted to the purposes of the Congested Districts Board. It has not yet been legally vested in the Board, and until so vested the lands cannot be disposed of. The Board's powers in dealing with such estates, bought for the relief of congestion, are laid down in the seventy-fifth section of the Irish Land Act, 1903. That section directs the Board to allot the lands primarily to migrants from congested districts; and afterwards, if lands remain over, they may be distributed to small tenants in the neighbourhood. So long as the Board are permitted to substantially fulfil their primary duty in respect of such estates, they are and will continue to be anxious to meet reasonable local claims in a liberal spirit. But it is obvious that if local claims are made predominant as the Question would appear to make them, the Congested Districts Board will be prevented from fulfilling what Parliament has regarded as one of its most important duties, the relief of congestion; may be compelled to abandon the purchase of estates for purposes of migration, and with it the hope of ever solving the problem of uneconomic holdings in the West of Ireland.

Cost of Labourers' Cottages.

Mr. JOHN ROCHE: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he has received a resolution from the Ballinasloe District Council relative to the building of labourers' cottages, also a table of charges which show that the acquiring of a cottage for a labourer since 1898 cost almost £100 more than it did previous to that date; and whether it is his intention to have the Act so amended as to abolish the extra charges at present made.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce*). The resolution has been received. The proposals contained in the Labourers' Bill, which the Government are to introduce, will tend to diminish largely the incidental expenses connected with schemes for labourers' cottages. I may, however, observe that, according to my information both the board of guardians and the rural district council in this case adopted a needlessly expensive course by making a number of schemes (18), each for a very small number of cottages, four of them embracing only one cottage each; and that in other respects they might have acted with a greater regard to economy.

Subsidy for Lower Shannon Steamer Tourist Service.

Mr. HALPIN: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether a subsidy can be renewed for the Lower Shannon steamer tourist service between Foynes, Tarbert, and Kilrush.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The hon. Member is mistaken in thinking that a steamer service to Foynes was subsidised. The Tarbert and Kilrush steamer service formed part of the Lower Shannon coach and steamer services which were established on 1st June, 1897, for a term of seven years, the other services being a coach service from Listowel to Tarbert, and a coach service from Enistymon to Ballyvaughan. The objects of these services were to encourage tourist traffic by providing a new through tourist route near the coast from Killarney to Galway, and to test the necessity of providing railways to Tarbert and Ballyvaughan respectively. The result was most disappointing. The losses on the services for the full subsidised period were, respectively, Listowel to Tarbert, £4,229; Tarbert to Kilrush, £3,728; Enistymon to Ballyvaughan, £1,850. The expenditure on the Tarbert and Kilrush services for the full term was £4,264, inclusive of subsidy amounting to £3,660, while the receipts were only £536. The services were withdrawn on the 31st May, 1904, and there is nothing before me to show that the Government would be justified in renewing the subsidies.

Relief of Distress (Ireland) Acts.

Mr. JOHN O'CONNOR (Kildare, N.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will state how many Relief of Distress (Ireland) Acts have been passed since the year 1879 to the present time; in how many years has relief been given to persons threatened by famine within that period; what has been the total increase in the taxation of Ireland for Imperial and local purposes within the same period; and has there been any remission of taxation within the areas so relieved under circumstances of distress that called for the application of such Relief of Distress Acts.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) Since 1879 the following Acts have been passed: Relief of Distress (Ireland) Act, 1880, Relief of Distress (Ireland) Amendment Act, 1880, Relief of Distressed Unions (Ireland) Act, 1883, Poor Relief (Ireland) Act, 1886, Outdoor Relief (Ireland) Act, 1895, Outdoor Relief (Ireland) Act, 1898, Outdoor Relief (Ireland) Act, 1897. In addition to these measures Acts dealing with seed supply and public loans were passed during the period mentioned. Exceptional measures for the relief of distress were adopted in the following years: 1879–80, 1885–6, 1890–91, 1894–5, 1897–8, 1904–5. The amount raised in 1879 by rates on property by local authorities was £2,619,183, and in 1903–4, £2,993,308, showing an increase of, £374,125. These figures include municipal rates. For particulars concerning Imperial taxation I beg to refer the hon. Member to Parliamentary Paper, Cd. 233, of 1905. As regards the final part of the Question, except in so far as the Government made grants in relief of local rates, no remission of ordinary taxation was allowed within the areas affected by distress.

Delay in Hearing Fair Rent Applications.

MR. MURPHY (Kerry, E.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland what is the explanation of the fact that 21,195 fair rent applications are at present before the Land Commission waiting to be disposed of; and whether he will take any steps to enable these applications to be heard, with the view of affording the necessary relief to tenants who desire to have their rents adjusted.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) I am informed by the Land Commission that the number of applications to fix fair rents pending on 28th February was 9,378, not 21,195 as stated in the Question, and that the outstanding cases will be disposed of as rapidly as possible

MR. FLAVIN (Kerry, N.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that notices of appeal, served five years ago, to have a fair rent fixed before the Chief Land Commissioners, are still unheard in the county of Kerry; whether he is aware that, pending the appeal, the tenants are compelled to pay the old rent; and whether he can say on what date the Chief Land Commission will hold a court in Kerry.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) I am informed by the Land Commission that the last appeal list for hearing at Killarney contained all cases in which appeals were lodged up to January, 1902. A further sitting for the hearing of appeals from county Kerry will be held during the approaching Easter or Trinity terms, but the precise date has not yet been arranged. When rents have been judicially fixed by a Sub-Commission Court, such rents are the rents payable until and unless they are varied on appeal, in which case a readjustment is made in respect of the difference.

Police Protection of Lord Ashtown in County Galway.

MR. JOHN ROCHE: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that Lord Ashtown applied for and obtained police protection about twelve months ago, on a plea that he was afraid of the tenants on the Galway estate, Cloncah, county Galway, which estate he was then trying to purchase in Judge Ross's Court; that, after the estate was sold to the Commissioners, he wanted to purchase the game on the tenants' holding, and upon his failure to secure it he had the police withdrawn; and whether he will take steps to prevent the police in Ireland from acting as gamekeepers to the local landlords.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) I am informed by the police authorities that it is not the fact that Lord Ashtown applied for police protection. The protection post at Clooncah, to which the

Question appears to refer, was established in 1902, but not for Lord Ashtown's protection, and this post was recently abolished when the police became satisfied that it was no longer necessary. The Inspector General informs me that there is no foundation for the suggestion that the police have acted as gamekeepers for Lord Ashtown.

Inquiry into Working of Irish Department of Agriculture—Names of Members of Committee.

Mr. DILLON (Mayo, E.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can now state the names of the men who are to conduct an inquiry into the working of the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction in Ireland; whether he can state the scope of the inquiry, the method of procedure, and the terms of reference; and how long he anticipates the inquiry will last.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The inquiry mentioned in the Question will be conducted by the following gentlemen:—Sir Kenelm Digby, K.C.B., K.C., late Under-Secretary of State for the Home Department; the hon. John Dryden, late Minister of Agriculture in Ontario; Mr. Francis Grant Ogilvie, C.B., Principal Secretary for Technology in the Board of Education; Mr. William Lawson Micks, a member of the Local Government Board for Ireland; and Mr. Stephen J. Brown, Chairman of Kildare County Council. The scope of the inquiry will be gathered from the terms of reference, which are as follows: "To inquire and report whether the provisions of the Act of 1899, constituting the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction, and the methods which the Department has followed in carrying out those provisions, have been shown by experience to be well suited to the conditions of Ireland; whether any, and, if so, what, changes are desirable in these provisions and methods; and to report also upon the relations of the Department to the Council of Agriculture, to the Board of Agriculture, and to the Board of Technical Instruction; upon its relations to local statutory bodies; upon the funds at its disposal and the modes of employing them; and upon its position in regard to other departments, especially those charged with educational functions." The method of procedure will be left to the Gentlemen forming the Committee, who will, I should think, find it desirable to visit some places in Ireland for the purpose of making inquiries on the spot, and who will doubtless give every opportunity to local authorities to communicate their views in the matter. I am unable to say at present how long the inquiry will last.

Meetings of Irish Board of Agriculture.

Mr. DILLON: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, whether a secret meeting of the Board of Agriculture and Technical Instruction has recently been held; and, if so, why its proceedings were not made public; and whether he will lay a full Report of these proceedings upon the Table of the House.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) I think this Question is put under a slight misapprehension as to the normal character of the meetings of the Agricultural Board and of the Board of Technical Instruction, each of which consists of twelve persons only. Whenever a meeting of either of these Boards is held, notice of the fact is sent to the Press; but it has not, and never has been, the practice to publish the proceedings at any of the meetings. It does not appear desirable to lay a Report of the proceedings upon the Table of the House, because this would set a precedent, and I understand that it is thought better to adhere to the existing practice.

Sales of Irish Estates of London Companies.

Mr. O'DOHERTY (Donegal, N.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether, having regard to the facts that a sum of £927,009 received by the London companies from the sale of Irish estates has already been diverted from Irish purposes, and that two sums of £191,709 and of £88,918 are in danger of a like fate, he will consent to the appointment of a small Select Committee to inquire and consider what legislation or other action if any, should be taken in these matters.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce*). It was, I understand, decided by the Master of the

Rolls in Ireland in 1898, that the Irish estates of the London companies were not subject to trusts for local public purposes, as was contended, but that the position of the companies in regard to these estates was the same as if they had been private individuals and not bodies corporate. This decision was subsequently confirmed by the Court of Appeal in Ireland. In these circumstances, I doubt whether any such result as the hon. Member seems to desire would be attained by the appointment of a Select Committee to inquire into the matter as suggested.

Irish Board of Agriculture—Appointment of Officials.

MR. CREAN (Cork, S.E.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the appointment of permanent officials to the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction, Ireland, is by public competition; and, if not, what process of selection is adopted; and whether he will consider the advisability of having all future appointments under this Department open to public competition, so that the best talent may be secured in the interest of the country.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The appointment of permanent officials to the Department is governed by the regulations which apply to the Civil Service generally. All such officials must obtain certificates of qualification from the Civil Service Commissioners as the result of examination by open or limited competition, as the case may be; (1) In the cases coming under Clause 7 of the Order in Council of 4th June 1870, in which the Civil Service Commissioners may dispense with examination wholly or partly on being satisfied that the person possesses the requisite knowledge and ability for the particular post to which it is proposed to appoint him; and (2) Those special cases coming within the provisions of Section 4 of The Superannuation Act, 1859, which enables the Treasury to appoint by warrant officers with professional or other qualifications not ordinarily to be acquired in the public service. I am not aware that a necessity exists in this Department for modifying the general rules.

Crime in Queen's County.

MR. MEEHAN: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, if his attention has been called to the charge delivered by the judge of assize at Maryborough, Queen's County, on the 3rd instant, when the judge said that the calendar in no way detracted from the character which the county had long borne as an orderly and law-abiding community; can he say what was the result of the trial of the four cases that composed the calendar; and whether he can say up to what period Queen's County was proclaimed under the Crimes Act and were special juries empanelled to try alleged political offences.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) I have read a newspaper report of the learned judge's address, which was to the effect stated. The result of the four cases comprising the calendar was that one person pleaded guilty, one was convicted, and two were acquitted. Queen's County was proclaimed, under Sections 3 and 4 of the Crimes Act, from 1st September 1902 to 6th February 1906, and I am informed that during that period a special jury was had in one case, namely, a case of incitement to murder, tried at winter assizes, 1902.

War Office Furniture Contracts—Evasion of the Fair Wage Clause.

MR. O'GRADY (Leeds, E.): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether his attention has been called to cases of contracts for furniture for his Department in which the fair wages clause has been evaded; whether he will see that the clause named will be rigidly enforced in future; and whether he will consider the advisability of publishing the names or title of the contracting firms before the contracts are finally signed.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) Any cases to which attention has been called have been fully investigated, and I can assure my hon. friend that the War Department will spare no endeavour to secure compliance with the wages clause, as with other terms of the contract. As regards the last part of the Question, I do not think it would be advisable to publish the names of the firms before the contracts are finally signed. A means of meeting the difficulty to which the Question points was discussed and approved in principle at the recent conference at the Admiralty, and I am taking steps to give effect to it.

War Office Saddlery and Harness Contracts—The Fair Wages Clause.

MR. CHIOZZA MONEY (Paddington, N.): To ask the Secretary of State for War if his attention has been directed to the rates of wages paid by Government contractors in the saddlery and harness trade in connection with Government work; and whether, in view of the Fair Wages Resolution, he will in future make it a condition of contract in this trade that the trade union rate of wages viz., 8d. per hour, must be adhered to.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) The rates of wages paid in connection with certain contracts for army saddlery are being investigated. As regards the last part of the Question, the existing clause concerning the rate of wages was introduced into contracts in accordance with the Resolution of the House of Commons, and is in conformity with it.

Appointment of Higher Division Clerks to the War Office.

SIR SAMUEL SCOTT (Marylebone, W.) To ask the Secretary of State for War, whether the Treasury intend for the future to appoint clerks of the higher division of the Civil Service to the War Office; and, if not, in what manner it is proposed to fill the posts at the War Office hitherto held by gentlemen belonging to that branch of the Civil Service.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) Representations on the subject have been made to the War Office by the Treasury and have been replied to, but no decision has yet been arrived at.

British Consuls for Canada.

VISCOUNT TURNOUR (Sussex, Horsham): To ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies, whether his attention has been called to the fact that, while other countries have a total of 372 consular officers in the Dominion of Canada, Great Britain has not a single official in the Dominion whose business it is to further British trade; and whether His Majesty's Government will see their way to remedy this state of affairs in the future.

(*Answered by Mr. Churchill.*) I have to refer the hon. Member to the Answer which I gave on the 22nd of February† to a similar Question from the hon. Member for South Wolverhampton.

Reports on Irish Franciscans' MSS.

SIR THOMAS ESMONDE (Wexford, N.): To ask the Secretary to the Treasury, when the Report on the MSS. of the Irish Franciscans will be published by the Historical Manuscripts Commission.

(*Answered by Mr. McKenna.*) The Report on these MSS. is now in type. It is hoped to issue it in the course of next month.

Memorial of Inspectors of Irish Board of Works.

SIR THOMAS ESMONDE: To ask the Secretary to the Treasury, if a memorial has been received by the Treasury from certain inspectors under the Board of Works in Ireland, and if the Treasury is disposed to consider it favourably.

(*Answered by Mr. McKenna.*) The subject of the memorial was brought before the Treasury by the Board of Works, but the Treasury was not able to grant the concessions asked for.

Overtime in the Collection Department of Irish Land Commission.

MR. NANNETTI (Dublin, College Green): To ask the Secretary to the Treasury, whether he is aware that during the usual half-yearly overtime in the Collection Department of the Irish Land Commission, assistant clerks (new class) are called upon to perform work of equal value and importance to that done by the second division clerks and third class clerks, although in the case of latter classes the renumeration is exactly double that of the former, viz.: 1s. 6d. as compared with 9d. per hour; and whether he will take the necessary steps to give the assistant clerks the same remuneration.

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† See (4) *Debates*, clii., 502.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) I am informed by the Land Commission that the Question does not correctly represent the facts. The clerks employed on overtime duty are paid at rates authorised by the Treasury, and the duty is of a kind which assistant clerks, who form the bulk of those engaged on the work, are quite competent to perform. No clerk is employed on overtime unless he so desires.

Promotion of Assistant Clerk to Second Division in Dublin Public Offices.

MR. NANNETTI: To ask the Secretary to the Treasury, whether he can assign any reason for the fact that in some Dublin offices assistant clerks (new class) have been promoted to the second division, whereas in other offices no such promotions have taken place; and whether he can state the number of assistant clerks (new class) promoted and the number eligible for promotion in the following Dublin offices: Local Government Board, Inland Revenue, National Education Office, General Post Office, Irish Land Commission, Department of Agriculture, Public Works Office, General Prisons Office, and Valuation Office.

(*Answered by Mr. McKenna.*) The Treasury can only approve such promotions on the recommendation of the head of a department. I have no information as to number of assistant clerks (new class) eligible for promotion. The following are the numbers of assistant clerks (new class) so promoted in the departments named: Local Government Board, 2; Inland Revenue, 2; Irish Land Commission, 1; Department of Agriculture, etc., 2. In addition, three assistant clerks not strictly speaking assistant clerks of the new class (formerly boy clerks) were so promoted, viz., Post Office, 1; Land Commission, 1; Department of Agriculture, 1.

Telephonic Communication between War Signal Stations.

MR. BELLAIRS: To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty, whether all the war signal stations in Great Britain are connected to the Admiralty by telephone through their head offices; and, if not, whether it is proposed to do so as soon as possible.

(*Answered by Mr. Edmund Robertson.*) Adequate arrangements are in existence for direct communication between the Admiralty and all war signal stations in case of mobilisation. Such arrangements can be put into force without delay.

Landing of Argentine Cattle in Channel Islands for Shipment to England.

MR. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick): To ask the hon. Member for South Somerset, as representing the President of the Board of Agriculture, whether at present there is anything to prevent Argentine cattle, or cattle from any other prohibitive country, being landed at one of the Channel Islands, and shipped from thence to London, where after a detention, not exceeding twelve hours and an inspection by the Board of Agriculture, they may be railed to pasture as store cattle; and, if not, whether we will take measures to prevent the importation of disease through this route for imported animals.

(*Answered by Sir Edward Strachey.*) It is very unlikely that the Channel Islands authorities will countenance in any way the importation of cattle into the Islands from Argentina or other prohibited countries. I propose, however, to communicate with those authorities through the Home Office on the subject, and, in the meantime, the hon. Member may rest assured that we shall take every possible means of preventing the introduction of disease into the

United Kingdom through the agency of animals brought from the Islands.

Veterinary Inspectors of Board of Agriculture as Member of Local Veterinary Associations of Great Britain.

Mr. FIELD: To ask the hon. Member for South Somerset, as representing the President of the Board of Agriculture, if he will explain why the veterinary inspectors of the animals division are allowed to be members of the local veterinary medical associations of Great Britain.

(*Answered by Sir Edward Strachey.*) I can see no objection to our veterinary inspectors being members of veterinary medical associations, which are bodies that are mainly concerned with the discussion of matters of professional and scientific interest. They may be trusted, I think, to bear in mind the limitations which naturally attach to them as members also of the public service.

Sheep Worrying by Dogs.

Mr. PIKE PEASE (Darlington): To ask the hon. Member for South Somerset, as representing the President of the Board of Agriculture, whether he has been informed that in December last Mr. H. F. Locke King, of Brooklands, Weybridge, had a valuable flock of South Down ewes worried by dogs, three being killed and twenty injured, that on the same date Colonel Annand, of Compton, Guildford, had two ewes killed and several injured, and on 21st January, Lord Rendel, of Hatchlands, Guildford, had eight ewes killed and four injured, and on 28th January, Mr. G P. Smithson, of West Clandon, Guildford, had three ewes killed and several injured, and on 29th January the flock of Mr. Smithson's was again attacked and scattered all over the country; whether his attention has also been called to the fact that many of these ewes suffered incalculable injuries, and that many of their lambs were born dead; whether some immediate measure will be taken for the prevention of sheep-worrying by dogs; whether Excise officers make any inquiries before 25th March as to whether owners of dogs have taken out licenses for them; whether it is the duty of a policeman to inquire if a dog is licensed or not; and if so, whether the wording of the licence can be altered, seeing that the present wording is misleading.

(*Answered by Sir Edward Strachey.*) We have received information as to the lamentable occurrences to which the hon. Member refers. They are by no means isolated cases, and I can only express the hope that the Bill which I have already introduced will be passed into law at no distant date, and that it will do something to mitigate what is undoubtedly a very serious evil so far as flockmasters are concerned. I am informed by the Board of Inland Revenue, with whom the enforcement of the law as to licences rests, that a large proportion of the inquiries made by their officers as to whether licences have been taken out are made before the 25th March. The police have power to inquire whether the owners of dogs are duly licensed, and they can prosecute any person who keeps a dog without a licence. This fact is indicated in a footnote to the licence, and I do not understand why the hon. Member should consider that the wording of the licence is misleading in this respect.

Duties and Prices of Wheat.

Dr. SHIPMAN (Northampton): To ask the President of the Board of Trade at what dates the cereal year begins and ends; what were the duties on imported wheat per imperial quarter in the United Kingdom, France, Germany, and Italy respectively, during the cereal year 1904–5; what were the percentages of imported wheat in the total wheat supply of each of these countries during that period; and what were the average prices of wheat per imperial quarter in each of these countries during the same period.

(*Answered by Mr. Lloyd-George.*) The cereal year for the four countries named in the Question begins approximately in the first week of September and ends in the last week of the following August.

The particulars asked for are given below :—

	United Kingdom.	France.	Germany.	Italy.
Duty on imported wheat per imperial quarter (cereal year 1904–5)	Nil	12s. 3d.	7s. 7d.	13s. 1d.
Average price of wheat per imperial quarter (cereal year 1904–5)	30s. 7d. (English Gazette price) 30s. 10d. (Average import value)	39s. 8d. (official price)	38s. 2d. (Berlin price) 36s. 0d. (Breslau price)	44s. 7d.
Percentage of imports to total supply (cereal year 1904–5)	85·8	2·8	34·9	18·6

Postal Deliveries in the Tooman and Clooncarne Districts.

MR. THOMAS SMYTH: To ask the Postmaster-General, if he will have the delivery of letters which leaves Johnston's Bridge post office (sub-office to Longford) for the Tooman and Clooncarne districts, at present, at 8.40 a.m., delayed until the second delivery of letters comes to Johnston's Bridge from Dromod, so that the people of the above-mentioned districts would have the benefit of the two deliveries, seeing that no extra expense will be entailed in connection with the change.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) I am having inquiry made on this subject, and will acquaint the hon. Member with the result in due course.

Vaccination Exemption Certificates—Case of Rev. H. Didcock.

MR. LYULPH STANLEY (Cheshire, Eddisbury): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been called to the case of the Reverend H. Didcock, who was refused a certificate of exemption under The Vaccination Act, 1898, by the Northwich bench, on the ground that he was not resident within its petty sessional district; whether he is aware that the Reverend H. Didcock has subsequently been fined ten shillings by the Oakmere magistrates for failure to have his child, Dorothy Didcock, vaccinated; and whether he will issue a circular to the benches of magistrates explaining The Vaccination Act, 1898.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Gladstone.*) My attention has been called to this case. I am advised that justices may properly refuse to entertain an application for an exemption certificate made by a person who does not reside within their district. I have already circulated to every court of summary jurisdiction a copy of the remarks made by the Lord Chief Justice explaining the conditions under which exemptions should be granted, and I will furnish a copy of this circular to the hon. Member.

Members of Alien Immigration Board for London.

Mr. STUART SAMUEL (Tower Hamlets, Whitechapel): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if he will state the names and addresses of the persons constituting the panel of the Immigration Board of London, together with the names and emoluments of any officials appointed in connection with the Aliens Act, not being medical officers or members of the Customs House or police force.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Gladstone.*) The names and addresses of the London Immigration Board are as follows:—Bailward, W. A., 1, Princes Mansions, Victoria Street; Boustred, George, 83, Clark Street, Commercial Road, E.; Bradford, H. W., J.P., 86, Eccleston Square, S.W.; Burnett, David, 15, Nicholas Lane, E.C.; Campbell, Colin F., 55, Bryanston Street, W.; Champernowne, F. G., 7, Bennett Street, St. James's Street, S.W.; Cohen, Leonard, Chairman, Jewish Board of Guardians, 27, Sussex Square, W.; Eickhoff, Walter, 176, Bethnal Green Road; Evans, T. J., 424, Mile End Road, E.; Francis, T. W., Dowlais House, Wanstead, Essex; Goodrich, Alfred Ordway, J.P., 352, Mile End Road, E.; Joseph, Alphonse D., 28, Holborn Viaduct, E.C.; Levisohn, H. R., Jewish Board of Guardians, 4, Wymering Mansions, Wymering Road, Elgin Avenue, W.; Martineau, P. M., J.P., Littleworth, Esher, Surrey; Miller, Thomas Hastings, J.P., Guildhall, E.C.; Morris, Bernhard, M.D., 170, Commercial Road, E.; Poulter, J. H., Barrister, 23, Westbourne Terrace, Hyde Park, W.; Stapley, Richard, 128, London Wall, E.C.; Stettauer, Carl, Jewish Board of Guardians, 49, Compayne Gardens, West Hampstead, N.W.; Swift, H. H., J.P., 45, Westbourne Terrace, Hyde Park, W.; Urwick, E. T., Poor Law Guardian, Toynbee Hall; Vallance, William, 55, Tressillian Road, Brockley, S.E.; Warren, George J., Poor Law Guardian, 20, Rhodeswell Road, E.; Willoughby, G. P., J.P., 4, Bedford Square, W.C.; Woodman, Sir George, Jewry House, 27 and 28, Old Jewry. The names and emoluments of the officials appointed for the Act (other than those excluded in the Question, and besides the interpreters who hold no actual appointment) are:—Clerks to the Board, Messrs. Janson, Cobb, and Pearson, 22, College Hill, E.C. Emolument to be fixed hereafter according to work entailed. Inspector under the Act, W. Haldane Porter. Salary £500 per annum, rising in eight years to £700.

Housing Requirements—Replies of District Councils.

Mr. BRODIE (Surrey, Reigate): To ask the President of the Local Government Board, whether it is the case that inquiries have recently been addressed to district and parish councils throughout the country, asking for a Return as to the housing requirements in their respective districts and parishes; whether any replies have yet been received; and whether in the event of such inquiries not having been made, he will consider the advisability of making them.

(*Answered by Mr. John Burns.*) Inquiries of the kind referred to were addressed to certain urban and rural district councils in 1901, and replies were duly received. I have not asked district and parish councils for a Return as to the housing requirements of their areas; but I recently addressed a circular to rural district councils relating to by-laws with respect to new streets and buildings, and I stated that the object of the circular was to secure that, whilst sanitary requirements should be strictly observed all unnecessary impediments in the development of building should be avoided.

Revenue derived from Coal Tax.

Mr. FENWICK (Northumberland, Wansbeck): To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he will state the net amount received from the Coal Tax at each shipping port in the United Kingdom since the 31st March, 1905.

(*Answered by Mr. Asquith.*) The net amount received from the coal tax at each shipping port in the United Kingdom from 1st April, 1905, to 28th February, 1906, is as follows :—

Ports.	Net Amount received.
Bristol Channel Ports :—	£
Bristol	990
Cardiff	565,373
Gloucester	33
Llanelly	9,908
Newport	137,151
Port Talbot	37,748
Swansea	71,257
Total	822,460
North Western Ports :—	
Barrow	13
Fleetwood	35
Liverpool	9,553
Manchester	4,014
Preston	27
Runcorn	69
Workington	5
Total	13,716
North Eastern Ports :—	
Amble	15,100
Blyth	101,845
Hartlepool	29,830
Middlesbrough	2,553
Newcastle, North and South Shields	378,976
Stockton	8
Sunderland	108,018
Total	636,330
Humber Ports :—	
Goole	28,192
Grimsby	53,939
Hull	76,953
Total	159,084
Other Ports on the East Coast :—	
Boston	4,768
Ipswich	96
London	6,688
Lynn	4,841
Total	16,393
Other English Ports :—	£
Dartmouth	15
Exeter	4
Plymouth	76
Southampton	9
Total	104
Total England and Wales	1,648,087
Ports on the East Coast of Scotland :—	
Aberdeen	3
Alloa	8,623
Borrowstouness	20,356
Burntisland	66,525
Dundee	134
Grangemouth	40,001
Granton	4,460
Kirkcaldy	4,323
Kirkwall	5
Leith	29,917
Lerwick	1
Methill	81,757
Total	256,105
Ports on the West Coast of Scotland :—	
Ardrossan	1,996
Ayr	473
Glasgow	66,363
Greenock	1,023
Troon	2,753
Total	72,608
Total Scotland	328,713
Ports on the Coast of Ireland :—	
Belfast	7
Cork	15
Dublin	12
Total Ireland	34
Total United Kingdom	1,976,834

The Budget—Exchequer Aid to Local Taxation.

MR. BRODIE: To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he has considered, or will consider, the advisability of making provision in his coming Budget statement for some assistance, or greater financial facilities, for local authorities who desire to build houses for the people within the districts they control.

(*Answered by Mr. Asquith.*) The whole question of Exchequer aid to local taxation will receive the early attention of the Government. I am not in a position to make any statement on the subject at present.

The Indian Budget.

SIR EDWARD SASSOON (Hythe): To ask the Secretary of State for India whether he would consider the expediency of getting the Indian Financial Statement taken at a period earlier than the end of the session; or, in the alternative, would the Government arrange for a day for the discussion of topics of general interest affecting the people of India about the middle of the session.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Morley.*) The object of the hon. Member is under my consideration, and I will do my best to secure it. I hope to include with the financial statement a survey of the topics of general interest to which he refers.

Governors of Irish Prisons.

MR. MEEHAN: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he is aware that ex-military men have recently been appointed governors of Irish prisons; if he will give a Return of the number appointed, salary and emoluments in each case, and say if any of the gentlemen are in receipt of pensions from the Army; will he say if they have had any training for the position; and whether, seeing that, by reason of their inexperience, they have to depend on their subordinates for the information necessary for the efficient discharge of their duties, and that such appointments were previously made from the staff of the Irish prison service, he will discontinue the appointment of inexperienced persons, and restore to the staff the prospect of promotion to the higher branches of the service.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) One recent case only has occurred of the appointment of an ex-military officer as governor of an Irish prison. There are, in all, four such gentleman serving. These were appointed in the years 1892, 1898, 1903, and 1906, respectively. Their present salaries are £415, £290, £170, and £310, respectively, with quarters, and one of them is in receipt of a military pension. Two of these gentlemen, including the one recently appointed, had previously been deputy governors of Irish prisons. The suggestion that such governors are necessarily dependent on their subordinates for the information necessary to the efficient discharge of their duties is not confirmed by the experience of the General Prisons' Board. The regulations which they have to enforce are clear and explicit. Promotions from subordinate positions to governorships are made when warranted, and the proportion of such promotions in Ireland is much larger than in other parts of the United Kingdom. Twenty years ago five governors, out of a total of twenty-two, had been promoted from subordinate ranks. At present eleven out of the existing eighteen governors have been so promoted.

Amalgamation of Blackwater Male and Female Schools.

SIR THOMAS ESMONDE: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, if it is the intention of the Commissioners of National Education in Ireland, to amalgamate the male and female schools at Blackwater, county Wexford, on the grounds that the attendance at the female school is insufficient; if he is aware that there are at present forty-seven girls on the roll of this school, with an average attendance of twenty-seven; if he is aware that this average attendance is likely to be considerably increased in the immediate future; and if, in view of the opposition which the proposed amalgamation will meet with in the district, he will use his influence with the Education Commissioners to defer the proposed amalgamation for the present, and until this House has had an opportunity of expressing its views upon the question of the amalgamation of male and female national schools in Ireland.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The Commissioners of National Education inform me that the teacher of the girls' school, in which the average attendance is under thirty, having recently resigned, it became necessary, in view of Rule 186, to ascertain whether the schools should be amalgamated. After consideration of the circumstances in connection with a report from the Board's senior inspector and a letter from the manager, the Commissioners have decided to postpone the question of amalgamation for the present, in view of the prospect of a sufficient average attendance henceforth at the girls' school. Should, however, an average of at least thirty pupils be not secured in the girls' department during the current year the question of amalgamation will be again brought forward.

Reconstruction of Poulduff Pier, County Wexford.

SIR THOMAS ESMONDE: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, when the work of reconstruction of Poulduff Pier, county Wexford, will be commenced.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) I am informed by the Department of Agriculture that the work of reconstructing Poulduff Pier has been in progress for some weeks.

The Great Seal for Ireland.

SIR THOMAS ESMONDE: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, who is responsible for the designing of the new Great Seal of Ireland.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The Great Seal of Ireland was, in pursuance of an Order in Council, engraved at the Royal Mint in 1903 from designs approved by a previous Order in Council. The hon. Baronet will find full information on the subject at page 16 of the Annual Report of the Deputy Master and Comptroller of the Mint for 1904 [Cd. 2588.]

Supposed Refusal of Loan to Mr. Martin Flood of Ballyborough.

SIR THOMAS ESMONDE: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, if he is aware that Mr. Martin Roche, of Ballyboro, Clonroche, Enniscorthy, county Wexford, has been refused a loan of £90 by the Board of Works for the erection of a hayshed and stable on the holding on which he lives, and which he owns in fee; if he is aware that Mr. Roche has also purchased, under the Land Purchase (Ireland) Acts, the adjoining holding which, together with the holding on which he resides, would afford ample security for the loan in question; and if he will give the necessary instructions to the Board of Works for the granting of the loan.

(*Answered by Mr. McKenna.*) No application from a Martin Roche for a loan can be traced. A Mr. Martin Flood of Ballyborough, Clonroche, Enniscorthy, applied for a loan in November last, and his may be the case referred to. He was the tenant, not the owner, of two holdings, and wanted to place on the smaller holding a hay barn too large for it, and to give as security also the second holding. Where there are two separate holdings, the Board have to consider only what is suitable for the one on which the works are placed, and they do not allow one holding to be burthened as security for a charge which arises on another holding. The loan was not proceeded with. Mr. Flood is in treaty for the purchase of his holdings; and, when the purchase has been completed, it may be possible to review the case, as the two holdings would then be merged in one owner.

New School at Ferns, County Wexford—Delay in Granting Loan.

SIR THOMAS ESMONDE: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, what is the cause of the delay, now of some years, in the making of the loan for the building of the new school at Ferns, county Wexford; if he is aware that this new school is badly needed; and if he will use his influence with the Commissioners of National Education to have the necessary funds advanced without further delay.

(*An wered by Mr. Bryce.*) I am informed by the Commissioners of National Education that the delay in dealing with this case arises from the fact that the new building plans and estimates for school houses, for which the manager elected to wait, have not yet been finally decided upon. The Commissioners are aware that necessity exists for a new school house in this case. The question of the revision of the plans is at present under the consideration of the Lords of the Treasury.

Evicted Tenants—County Wexford.

Sir THOMAS ESMONDE: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, if he will state the number of evicted tenants in county Wexford; the number whose cases have been settled since November, 1903; the number of cases in process of settlement; the amount of money advanced to evicted tenants in that county up to the present date, whether by way of loan or by way of grant; and whether there is any likelihood of the settlement of the evicted tenants question in the county of Wexford being accelerated in the immediate future.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The Estates Commissioners have received 198 applications from evicted tenants in this county. The number reinstated since November, 1903, to the knowledge of the Commissioners, is 77. Two cases are now in process of settlement, and inquiries will be made by the Commissioners into the remaining cases, in accordance with the recent regulations. The Commissioners have sanctioned loans amounting to £1,141, and grants amounting to £2,128 to evicted tenants reinstated in this county.

Irish Department of Agriculture—Leaflets and Tuberculosis.

Mr. FIELD: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he is aware that Leaflet No. 69, issued by the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction for Ireland, dealing with the prevention of tuberculosis in cattle urges owners of tuberculous cattle, unless the same are of extraordinary value for breeding purposes, to fatten such cattle, for sale as soon as possible; and whether, in the public interest, inasmuch as the sale of tuberculous meat is held to be a criminal offence in the retailer, he proposes to take any action in the matter.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) In the leaflet in question the Department recommend the fattening of animals which are in the early stages of attack and the flesh of which is not affected, and cannot properly be described as tuberculous meat. The Department do not recommend the fattening of animals in an advanced stage of the disease. Lest there should be any ambiguity, the Department will make the wording of the passage on this point more definite. The leaflet further points out the advantages of tuberculin, by the use of which the presence of tuberculosis may be detected before the presence of the disease can be discovered by the eye.

Re-appointment of Mr. Longan to Position of Petty Sessions' Clerk at Dungarvan.

Mr. O'SHEE (Waterford, W.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, whether it is intended to sanction the re-appointment of Mr. R. J. Longan to the position of petty sessions clerk of the Dungarvan district in view of the fact that he retired by reason of age or infirmity from the same about a year ago, and obtained a pension; whether, since his retirement, his son was appointed but failed to qualify; and whether he is aware that the father has now been re-elected by the magistrates to the office in respect of which he had previously gone out on pension.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) Mr. R. J. Longan resigned this post on account of ill-health in 1905, and was awarded a pension. His son, Mr. P. Longan, was thereupon elected by the magistrates, but has since resigned. The magistrates have now re-elected Mr. R. J. Longan, but as this gentleman is disqualified by age, the Lord-Lieutenant was unable to approve of his appointment, and a new election has been ordered.

Traffic Board for London.

Mr. REMNANT (Finsbury, Holborn): To ask the First Lord of the Treasury, whether the Government proposes to ignore the unanimous recommendation of the London Traffic Commission in favour of a Traffic Board; and, if so, what are the reasons which have led them to adopt such a course.

(*Answered by Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman.*) The Government do not propose to ignore the recommendations of the London Traffic Commission, but they are not as yet in a position to express an opinion on the findings of this body; and, as I have already said, I cannot hold out any hope of legislation on the question during the present session.

Sir William Butler.

SIR SAMUEL SCOTT: To ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether Sir William Butler has been sent out to South Africa on a mission by any department of the Government other than the War Office, or under the auspices of the Government; and, if so, whether he will state the nature of that mission.

(*Answered by Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman.*) No mission whatever has been confided to Sir William Butler by His Majesty's Government.

Power Bills before Parliament.

MR. BRODIE: To ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether, in view of the number of Bills for the supply of power to different parts of the Metropolitan area which are before Parliament, or likely to be before Parliament in the near future, he has considered the advisability of appointing a Royal Commission to inquire into the whole subject; and whether he is able to announce any decision in this respect.

(*Answered by Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman.*) There is no intention of appointing a Royal Commission on this question.

THE ARRANGEMENT OF QUESTIONS.

MR. DILLON (Mayo, E.) on a point of order, asked as to the arrangement of Questions on the Paper. He said that for a great number of years the right of asking Questions went according to priority, according as the Questions were handed in at the table, but some years ago with the general assent of the House, but not in accordance with any Standing Order or decision of the House, and at the request of the Prime Minister, all questions put to him were grouped at the end of Question term. But now that system had extended, and all reference to priority in handing in Questions was lost sight of. He wished to ask whether that was not a direct violation of the rights of Members as settled by ancient custom. In his own case, although he handed in a Question last Thursday and saw it numbered sixty-three, it was to-day 110 on the list. He wished to know by what right hon. Members were thus deprived of their title to put Questions?

*MR. SPEAKER: The point was raised last Thursday by the hon. Member for South Donegal, and I am afraid I can add nothing to the reply I then gave. The arrangement was made for the general convenience, and the order in which Questions are asked is directed by the Prime Minister and those sitting on the Government Bench, who are responsible for these matters. I may remind the hon. Member that I suggested also that this was a Question which seemed to me a very proper one to go before the Committee on Procedure.

*MR. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal S.): May I——

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order. The hon. Member is now occupying the time set apart for Questions.

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

British Commercial Representations in the Colonies.

MR. WALKER (Leicestershire, Melton): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the question of the appointment of British commercial representatives in Australia and New Zealand, as well as in Canada, is being considered at the present time; and what commercial agents in British Colonies, or further Colonial correspondents of the Commercial Intelligence Branch, have been appointed since the publication of Cd. 2044 in 1904.

*THE UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. CHURCHILL, Manchester, N.W.): The appointment of commercial correspondents in Australia is receiving consideration. A complete list of such correspondents in the colonies, including New Zealand as they stood at the beginning of the year, will be found on pages 584 and 585 of the issue of the Board of Trade Journal for 28th December last, and a comparison between it and the list of 1904 will show the additions which have been made. In case the hon. Gentleman should find any difficulty in extracting the information he desires, I shall be glad if he will communicate with me.

SIR GILBERT PARKER (Gravesend): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade, in view of the increasing efforts of foreign countries, through consular and commercial representations, to develop their trade in our Colonies, will he consider the advisability of appointing British trade agents in our self-governing Colonies.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE, Carnarvon Boroughs): The appointment of British Trade correspondents in the self-governing Colonies is receiving the consideration of the Advisory Committee on Commercial Intelligence. Five such correspondents have already been appointed in South Africa, and steps are now being taken with a view to make similar appointments in Australia, New Zealand, and Canada. Since the publication of Cd. 2044 in 1904, fourteen commercial correspondents of the Board of Trade have been appointed by the Governments of various Colonies and Protectorates including Newfoundland, Ceylon, Federated Malay States, Northern and Southern Nigeria, British Central Africa, Cyprus.

Opium Imports into South Africa.

MR. SMEATON (Stirlingshire): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether opium is imported into the Transvaal for the consumption of the Chinese coolies; if so, whence it comes; the quantity and value annually imported since the arrival of the first batch of Chinese coolies; at whose expense the drug is imported; what duty, if any, is imposed on the drug at the ports; whether the value of the opium supplied to the coolies is deducted from their wages; and through what agency the drug is distributed among the coolies.

*MR. CHURCHILL: Under Section 8 of the Ordinance of 1905, amending the Labour Importation Ordinance of 1904, published at page 59 of Cd. 2786, the possession by and supply to labourers of opium is penalised. The Ordinance came into operation on 19th September, and opium is, therefore, not now legally imported for their consumption. I am not able to give the amount imported annually, but the amount imported for the quarter ended 30th September, 1905, is given as of the value of £5,381, the duty imposed at the ports under the Customs Convention is 10 per cent. *ad valorem.* The Chinese police are said by Lord Selborne to have been guilty of selling opium to the coolies, but every effort is no doubt made to put an effectual stop to any such practice.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Louth, N.): Are the Chinese told before leaving China that they cannot get opium?

[No Answer was returned.]

Repatriation of Chinese Coolies.

MR. MITCHELL-THOMSON (Lanarkshire, N.W.): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether His Majesty's Government propose to include in the expenses of the repatriation of Chinese coolies the cost of transport from ports of disembarkation in China to their several domiciles; and, if so, what proportion of the total cost it is estimated that such expenses will form; and whether the Chinese Government will be requested to reimburse His Majesty's Government for all, or any part, of such expenses; or, should it be the intention of His Majesty's Government only to pay the expenses of return to the ports, whether steps will be taken to ensure that the Chinese Government acquiesce in this arrangement, and are prepared to defray the remainder of the expense of restoring the coolie to his home.

*MR. CHURCHILL: Neither the coolies' contract nor Clause 14 of the Labour Importation Ordinance under which he can purchase repatriation provides for the cost of transport from the port of debarkation to the coolie's home. Nor does the Convention with China impose any such liability on the Chinese Government. But inasmuch as labourers who purchase under Clause 14 have presumably sufficient funds to take them to their homes, while labourers who are assisted by His Majesty's Government have necessarily less than £17 10s., arrangements are under consideration to safeguard coolies from being landed penniless on the coast of China.

The New Hebrides.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he can give an assurance that the Anglo-French Agreement in reference to the New Hebrides will not be finally concluded without the consent and approval of the Australian Government.

*MR. CHURCHILL: A draft Convention respecting the New Hebrides was recently signed by a joint Anglo-French Commission sitting in London for submission to the British and French Governments. It was then made perfectly clear that the draft Convention would be communicated to the Governments of the Commonwealth of Australia and New Zealand, who have been informed that it will not be confirmed until His Majesty's Government have had an opportunity of considering the views of those Governments.

Government Policy on Chinese Labour.

SIR GILBERT PARKER (Gravesend): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether it is the intention of the Government to discontinue Chinese labour at the expiration of the present contract, unless the Transvaal under responsible government shall agree to admit Chinese as citizens.

*MR. CHURCHILL: The policy of His Majesty's Government has already been very fully explained to the satisfaction of Parliament. His Majesty's Government are not concerned to procure for the Chinese the privileges of citizenship, but to maintain much more elementary rights.

Colonial Conference.

MR. TREVELYAN (Yorkshire, W.R., Elland): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the date of the next Colonial Conference has been settled; and what preparations are being made for it.

*MR. CHURCHILL: The exact date of the next Colonial Conference is not yet fixed, but the Colonial Premiers have been asked whether early in March next would be a convenient date. The collection and analysis of the statistics and information for use at the Conference will be undertaken as soon as possible.

Mr. Pless.

MR. BRIDGEMAN (Shropshire, Oswestry): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he will state to the House what information was in the possession of the Secretary of State for the Colonies on the 15th February which led him to make inquiries as to the possibility of prosecuting Mr. Pless.

*MR. CHURCHILL: The information which was in the possession of the Secretary of State was that contained in the affidavit published at p.30 of Cd. 2819.

Chinese Coolies and Repatriation.

MR. EVELYN CECIL (Aston Manor): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies if he has now received information enabling him to estimate the number of Chinese coolies in the Transvaal likely to demand repatriation at the cost of the British taxpayer.

*MR. CHURCHILL: I would refer the hon. Member to my reply to the hon. Member for North Mayo on the 6th instant.†

Canada and the Fiscal Controversy.

MR. MACVEAGH (Down, S.): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether his attention has been called to Sir Wilfrid Laurier's statement in Toronto, that Canada is content to attend to her own affairs in the making of her tariff, and has no desire to interfere with the people of Great Britain in their controversy over fiscal matters; and whether these views of the Canadian Government will be made known by the Colonial Office to the delegates attending the next Colonial Conference.

*MR. CHURCHILL: I have seen a report of the speech to which the hon. Member appropriately refers, and which appears fully to confirm all that has been said by free traders of the correct and disinterested attitude, consistently maintained by Canadian statesmen throughout the course of the fiscal controversy. The Canadian representative will no doubt state with perfect freedom and frankness the views of his Government on this, as on any other question that may be discussed at the Colonial Conference.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cliii., 291.

Princess Ena's Marriage.

MR. T. L. CORBETT (Down, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether it is proposed to send a special embassy to Spain, in connection with the approaching wedding of His Majesty the King of Spain; and, if so, whether the expenses in connection with such embassy will be submitted by special Vote to the House of Commons.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: Before the hon. Gentleman answers that Question may I ask if he will bear in mind that it is put by one of the so-called loyal minority in Ireland?

THE SECRETARY TO THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. RUNCIMAN, Dewsbury) (for SIR EDWARD GREY): The date of the wedding not having been fixed yet, the appropriate arrangements have not yet been considered. The cost of special embassies is borne by the Diplomatic and Consular Vote.

Deserters from the Russian Army.

MR. STUART SAMUEL (Tower Hamlets, Whitechapel): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, having regard to the rejection of deserters from the Russian Army from this country, is he aware whether there is an arrangement or understanding between Germany and Russia to mutually surrender deserters from their respective armies; and, if he does not possess such information, will he take steps to ascertain if such an arrangement is in operation or not.

MR. RUNCIMAN: There is no understanding between Germany and Russia for the mutual surrender of military deserters.

Slave Selling in Morocco City.

MR. ASHLEY (Lancashire, Blackpool): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs if the practice of selling slaves in the public market still continues in Morocco City; and, if so, will His Majesty's Representatives at the Algeciras Conference receive instructions to bring this matter before the delegates, with a view to combined action for its immediate abolition.

MR. RUNCIMAN: His Majesty's Government have no recent reports from Morocco City. The appointment of a British Consular Officer in that capital is under consideration. Meanwhile, the British delegate at Algeciras was instructed some time ago to take an opportunity—which it is hoped will shortly present itself—of bringing the question of slavery before the Conference with the view to a collective expression of opinion being obtained from the representatives of all the treaty Powers. His Majesty's Government feel confident that this course will offer the best means of making the desired impression on the Sultan.

Administration of the Aliens Act.

MR. TREVELYAN (Yorkshire, W.R., Elland): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how soon he will intimate by way of rule or otherwise to the Immigration Boards that the proceedings of the Boards must be open to the public and the Press; and whether he is yet in a position to state precisely what other modifications of the procedure under the Aliens Act he proposes to introduce.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. GLADSTONE, Leeds, W.): I am drafting a rule dealing with the admission of the Press to meetings of Immigration Boards, and in the meantime I have recommended the Boards to give reasonable facilities for the attendance of reporters. I understand that a voluntary committee is about to be formed with a view to supplying evidence to the Immigration Boards on behalf of political and religious refugees. If this committee consists—as I believe will be the case—of responsible and reliable persons, I shall be glad to give it whatever facilities I can for effecting its purpose. I have made an order restoring twenty as the number of aliens which will constitute a ship an immigrant ship, and make her liable to inspection under the Act. I have issued a circular letter to all the Immigration Boards respecting immigrants who may claim to be seeking admission to this country on the ground that they are religious or political refugees. I quote from it the following passages :—" The Act was passed for the purpose of checking the immigration of undesirable aliens. Parliament, in the judgment of the Secretary of State, never intended that in the administration for that object of the provisions of the Act, they should be applied with a rigidity which excludes consideration whether refusal of leave to land would involve great personal hardship or suffering in the case of women and children. So, too, a man who is free from any infectious or objectionable disease may be in a critical state of health, and to refuse him leave to land might expose him to cruel hardship. Again, the statements of a man claiming to be a political or religious refugee may be insufficient or inaccurate, yet he may be exposed to serious risk from political causes if he is forced to return. Though the Secretary of State recognises that the absence of corroborative evidence frequently makes it extremely difficult for Boards to come to a decision in cases falling within the proviso to Section 1 (3) of the Act, he hopes that, having regard to the present disturbed condition of certain parts of the Continent, the benefit of the doubt, where any doubt exists, may be given in favour of any immigrants who allege that they are flying from religious or political persecution in disturbed districts, and that in such cases leave to land may be given." Next, in order to prevent the possibility of any immigrant not being made aware of his right to appeal, through ignorance of the languages spoken by the interpreters, I am having a notice printed in a large number of languages stating that provision of the Act, which will be handed to immigrants rejected by the immigration officer. Finally, I have issued to all the immigration officers instruction that in all cases in which immigrants coming from the parts of the Continent which are at present in a disturbed condition, allege that they are flying from religious or political persecution, the benefit of the doubt, where any doubt exists, as to the truth of the allegation must be allowed, and leave to land must be given.

SIR W. EVANS GORDON (Tower Hamlets, Stepney): Are we to understand that all immigrants coming from any disturbed part of the Continent, especially Russia, are to be admitted without question?

*MR. GLADSTONE: I have already answered that Question.

SIR HOWARD VINCENT: What disturbed places are there on the Continent at the present time?

*MR. GLADSTONE: The hon. and gallant Gentleman knows quite as well as I do.

SIR W. EVANS GORDON : This is a matter of very great and far-reaching importance; and I should like if the Secretary of State would tell us whether the provisions of Clause 3, which lays down definite categories of persons to be excluded, are to be set aside in regard to these countries that are now in a disturbed state.

*MR. GLADSTONE: I have nothing to add to what I have said.

SIR W. EVANS GORDON rose again amid loud MINISTERIAL cries of "Order."

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order. Notice must be given of any other Question. The hon. and gallant Member is not entitled at this time to make any statement.

SIR W. EVANS-GORDON: I wish, Sir, to address you personally. In view of the importance of this Answer, I shall ask leave at the end of Question time to move the adjournment of the House.

MR. J. R. MACDONALD (Leicester): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he can state what is the nature of proof required of immigrants under the Aliens Act to show that they are political or religious refugees.

*MR. GLADSTONE: I have made inquiries of all the immigration boards on this point. At ten out of thirteen immigration ports no claim for the privileges of a refugee has come before the boards. In the remaining three cases, Grimsby, Hull, and London, the substance of the answers was as follows:—Grimsby: The alien's word is accepted subject to cross-examination by the board, and supplemented by the board's knowledge of places where persecution, riots, etc., have taken place. Hull: The utmost latitude is exercised in accepting the alien's word. London: Latitude is exercised in the direction of accepting the alien's word. The board are guided by their general impression as to the genuineness of his story. Every case is dealt with on its own merits, but, generally speaking, any reasonable probability of the claim being genuine has sufficed to admit.

MR. LEIF JONES (Westmoreland, Appleby): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he will inform the House on what principle, and by whom, members are chosen from the panels to sit on immigration Boards; for what period immigration boards are constituted; and whether any instructions have been issued to secure a proper rotation of members of the panels, so that every member shall serve in due course upon the immigration boards.

*MR. GLADSTONE: The immigration boards are summoned by the clerk, who is required by the Rules to summon every member on the list in turn, so far as practicable, provided that, where possible, a magistrate shall always be a member of the Board.

MR. WEDGWOOD (Newcastle-under-Lyme): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department under what powers an immigration board is justified in regarding a deserter from the Russian forces as a criminal and not a refugee; and whether he will give such instructions as will prevent such an interpretation in future.

*MR. GLADSTONE: A deserter is not a criminal within the meaning of the Aliens Act, and I am not aware that any immigration board has taken that view.

MR. J. R. MACDONALD: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he is aware that the immigration officer responsible for the deportation of Alexander Onix has stated that, in his opinion, a deserter from the Russian Army was a criminal, and therefore not entitled to enter this country as a political refugee; whether any such instructions have been issued by the Home Office; and whether any steps have been taken to remove such impressions from the minds of immigration officers.

*MR. GLADSTONE: No, Sir, I am not aware that any immigration officer has expressed the opinion suggested. I understand that the interpreter engaged in the case in question is reported in the newspaper Press to have expressed some such view in an interview. But the responsibility of refusing leave to land does not rest with the interpreter. It rests with the immigration officer, and all those officers are well aware that the only crimes for which an immigrant can be excluded from this country are extradition crimes—a category which does not include military desertion. It is clear that the fact that an immigrant was a deserter could not detract from any claim he might have to the privileges of a political refugee.

MR. STUART SAMUEL: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will state the number of criminals who have been refused admission to this country since the 1st January last under the operations of the Aliens Act.

*MR. GLADSTONE: The only persons who can be excluded from this country under the Aliens Act on the ground that they are criminals are those who have been sentenced in a foreign country for a crime for which they might be extradited from this country. No such persons are known to have presented themselves for admission since the beginning of the year.

MR. MADDISON (Burnley) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department if it were true that a young man, refused the right to land under the Aliens Act on the ground that he was consumptive, had been detained on board a ship at Milwall in a cabin eight feet by six feet since last Thursday and was to remain there till next Wednesday. If so, would the right hon. Gentleman take steps to get the man released and to prevent a repetition of such a scandalous thing.

*Mr. GLADSTONE said he had absolutely no power of interference under the Aliens Act. The case was decided by the immigration board, and he could not annul their decision.

Mr. MADDISON: Will the right hon. Gentleman see the shipowners on the subject?

*Mr. GLADSTONE: I am making inquiry, and if the man can be released no doubt he will be.

Mr. LEIF JONES: By what authority is the man imprisoned in this cabin?

*Mr. GLADSTONE: Under the Act. The captain is held responsible that he does not land.

Quack Medicines.

Mr. MYER (Lambeth, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been directed to the frauds perpetrated upon the public by the advertising and sale of quack medicines, and the consequent loss of money sustained by the public and frequent postponement of proper remedial measures being taken by the sufferers in specific diseases; and whether the Government will take any, and, if any, what, steps either by the institution of prosecutions for fraud or obtaining money by false pretences, or by direct prohibitive legislation to deal with this matter.

*Mr. GLADSTONE: I do not doubt that the advertisement and sale of quack medicines is often the cause of serious mischief; but it is an evil which must be met rather by the spread of education than by legislation or prosecution. The difficulties of proving fraud in such cases are, I fear, almost insuperable. If the hon. Member will refer to the proceedings in the Harness Belts case in 1894 he will understand some of the difficulties I refer to.

Police Pensions for Ex-Soldiers.

Mr. STEPHEN COLLINGS (Lambeth, Kennington): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if, in view of the fact that men serving in the Metropolitan police who served in the Egyptian Campaign are not allowed to count towards their pension the time during which they were absent from the force upon active service, whereas those men who served in the South African Campaign are allowed to count the time towards their pension, he can arrange that service in the Egyptian Campaign shall be similarly counted for pension.

*Mr. GLADSTONE: This matter is one that requires legislation, and it is dealt with in Clause 3 of the Police Superannuation Bill, now before Parliament. A special Act (the Police Reservists Act, 1902) was passed to meet the case of police called out for service in South Africa.

Vivisection.

Mr. G. GREENWOOD (Peterborough): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if his attention has been drawn to the Return showing the number of experiments performed on living animals during the year 1904, under licences granted under the Act 39 and 40 Vic., c. 77, distinguishing painless from painful experiments; whether the sixteen experiments performed by Dr. William Bain, and recorded in the Return, in some of which septic bacilli were introduced into the interior of the gall bladders of dogs through wounds two or three inches long, made for that purpose, and in all of which one or more gall stones were also inserted into the living dogs gall bladders, and left there for periods varying from fourteen to seventy days, and in thirteen of which a post-mortem examination proved that the gall bladders were inflamed at the time of death, should not properly have been distinguished as painful; and whether the operations described by Dr. Bain as involving the insertion of septic bacilli into wounds in dogs made by himself for that purpose are properly reported in such Return as asceptic operations.

*Mr. GLADSTONE: The Answer to the first part of the hon. Member's Question is in the affirmative. I am advised that the Answer to the second part is that the experiments could not properly be described as painful. Those of the animals which the inspector saw gave no indication of pain, and the operator declares that he did not believe that the animals suffered any pain. The symptoms observed in a post-mortem examination did not indicate suffering. As to the third part of the Question I am advised that, as the actual operation was performed under aseptic conditions, it is properly described as aseptic.

Home Office and Convicts' Petitions.

MR. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will state what are the arrangements which he proposes to make by way of strengthening the staff of his Department which is charged with the duty of examining into and reporting upon the petitions of convicted persons.

*MR. GLADSTONE: As I indicated in my statement on the Vote on Account, I have made certain proposals to my right hon. friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer. He has not yet had time to go fully into the matter, so I cannot make any definite statement at present. The steps to be taken will in any case depend to some extent on the question of the establishment of a Court of Criminal Appeal.

Metropolitan Police.

MR. PICKERSGILL: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what is the estimated additional cost which would be involved by giving to the Metropolitan police one day's rest a week, instead of the present practice of one day's rest a fortnight.

*MR. GLADSTONE: At the present rate of pay the additional cost would be not less than £150,000 a year.

Continental Tariffs.

SIR HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade if the new tariffs against British goods of Germany, Russia, Austria Hungary and Italy, which came into force on the 1st March have increased the difficulty of access to those markets by British traders not establishing themselves within the tariff walls; and what steps he is taking in the interests of British labour.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: No new tariff has come into force in Italy, and recent changes in the Italian Customs duties have been of the nature of reductions. The new Russian, German and Austro-Hungarian tariffs are, on the whole, higher than those which they replace, but it is too early to make any statement as to their actual effect on British trade. I deprecate the suggestion in the Question that any of these tariffs is specially directed against British goods.

SIR HOWARD VINCENT: What steps does the right hon. Gentleman propose to take?

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: I hope to be able to make a statement on this subject later on.

Import Duty Returns.

*MR. HILLS (Durham): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether, in view of the recent alterations in the tariff of Germany and other European countries, he will have brought up to date the figures on page 292 and following pages of the Second Fiscal Blue-book [Cd. 2337] of 1904, showing the average incidence of foreign import duties on the principal manufactured exports of the United Kingdom.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: A Return is in preparation which will give a good deal of information as to the effect of recent changes in some of the more important Continental tariffs. As regards the particular figures referred to in the Question, I am advised that the method of index numbers by which they were arrived at, while affording a useful means of comparing the level of different tariffs at a given time, is unsuitable for measuring changes in the incidence of the same tariff over a short period of years. The reasons can be explained more fully if the hon. Member will call at the Board of Trade.

Sugar Prices.

SIR GILBERT PARKER: I beg to ask the President to the Board of Trade what were the prices of raw sugar and of refined sugar of different grades respectively, at the date of the passing of the Sugar Convention; and what are the prices of the same sugars at the present time.

THE SECRETARY TO THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. KEARLEY, Devonport): In March, 1902, when the Sugar Convention was signed, the market price of 88 per cent. raw beet f.o.b. Hamburg was 6s. 6d. per cwt. In September, 1903, when the Convention came into force it had risen to 8s. 6d. (refined beet sugar f.o.b. in March, 1902, was 8s. 1d. per cwt., in September, 1903, 10s. 4d.) To-day's prices of beet and refined respectively are 8s. 4d. and 10s. 4d.

Wage Census.

SIR GILBERT PARKER: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade, when the proposed new wage census will be taken; what departures, if any, will be made from the form of schedule issued to employers for the 1886 census; whether information will be sought as to the maximum and minimum number of hours worked by the employees of the various firms; whether trade unions will be invited to make supplementary returns; and whether any steps are proposed to secure a larger percentage of returns than in 1886, when only 13½ per cent. of the schedues issued were returned.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: It is proposed that the wages census shall relate to the present year and shall be taken as soon as possible after its termination. The forms of schedule are now under consideration, but I may say that the experience gained since 1886, will be utilised to amend the forms issued to employers, care being taken to preserve the comparability of the figures so far as possible. Information as to hours of labour will be sought and trade unions will be invited to give certain information as to wages and hours. In view of the improvement of the mode of procedure and the increasing willingness of employers to furnish returns to the Department, it is confidently hoped that a much larger number of returns will be obtained than in 1886.

*MR. DAVID MACIVER (Liverpool, Kirkdale): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he is in a position to give the House any information with regard to the export and import trade of France, Germany, and the United States, for the purpose of comparison with the trade of this country, and particularly as to whether he has any official information showing that the export and import trade of these protectionist countries has during recent years increased much more considerably than our own.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: The information asked for is contained in the "Statistical Abstract of Foreign Countries" and the "Monthly Returns of Foreign Trade and Commerce," published by the Board of Trade. In 1905 the exports of British produce from the United Kingdom increased by about 10 per cent. in value compared with 1904. The aggregate exports from France, Germany, and the United States increased by 9 per cent. The increase of imports into France, Germany, and the United States was 8 per cent. compared with an increase of 1½ per cent. in the case of the United Kingdom.

Roumanian Commercial Treaty.

MR. HAROLD COX (Preston): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether the recently concluded commercial treaty with Roumania secures substantial concessions to this country; and whether any threats of retaliation were used by the British negotiators of the treaty to secure such concessions.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: The answer to the first part of the Question is, Yes; and to the last part, No.

Exports to British Possessions.

SIR SCOTT ROBERTSON (Bradford, Central): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade if he has any official information showing why, during the last three years, our exports to Australia and to Canada, in spite of Canada's preference to this country, have remained practically stationary; and why, if we put the East Indian trade aside, our exports to all other British possessions show a diminution of more than 6,000,000 sterling, although our exports to foreign countries show an increase of nearly 37,000,000.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: The facts are virtually as stated by the hon. Member in his question. The circumstances and prospects of British trade with Australia are at the present moment being investigated on the spot by a Commissioner sent out by the Commercial Intelligence Committee of the Board of Trade, and steps are being taken to despatch a similar mission to Canada. No doubt the reports of these Commissioners will give the information which the hon. Member seeks. The diminution referred to in the last part of the Question is more than accounted for by the falling off of exports to South Africa.

British Exports to South Africa.

SIR SCOTT ROBERTSON: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade, if his attention has been drawn to the exports from this country to South Africa during the last three years, which includes the period of the working of the Chinese Labour Ordinance from the beginning; and whether he has any official information explaining why the value of these exports has fallen from about £25,000,000 in 1903 to about £16,000,000 at the present time.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE said the year 1903 being the first complete year after the restoration of peace in South Africa was naturally a year of maximum importation and therefore hardly affords a fair basis of comparison with the year just past.

Redistribution Committee Expenditure.

MR. CHARLES DEVLIN (Galway): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board, if he will state in what manner the £1,200 paid to the Redistribution Committee were expended; was the allowance for salary, and, if so, at what rate of salary per month were the members of the Committee paid; and, if not, was the allowance for travelling expenses; and, if so, what parts of England, Wales, Scotland, and Ireland were visited.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. JOHN BURNS, Battersea): The expenditure was in even money as follows:—Remuneration of members of the Committee and of persons employed by them, £1,103. Travelling and incidental expenses, £93. The remuneration of two of the members of the Committee was at the rate of five guineas for each day on which they were engaged on the work of the Committee. The third member received a payment of £200. The places visited by members of the Committee were King's Lynn, Pontefract, Taunton, Stafford and Windsor. The travelling and personal expenses of any member of the Committee when necessarily absent from home were paid.

MR. CHARLES DEVLIN: No part of Ireland was visited?

MR. JOHN BURNS: Apparently not.

MR. CHARLES DEVLIN: Although they were going to wipe out thirty seats.

Insanitary Houses at Somers Town.

MR. LEA (St. Pancras, E.): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether his attention has been called to the insanitary condition of Little Clarendon Street, Somers Town; and whether he will direct the attention of the St. Pancras Borough Council, with a view to dealing with this under the Housing of Working Classes Acts, 1890 to 1903.

MR. JOHN BURNS: I have communicated with the Town Clerk and am informed that hitherto the property in this street has been dealt with by the Borough Council under the Public Health (London) Act, and that a large number of notices are being served from time to time requiring the owners to maintain the property in a sanitary condition. The question of dealing with the property under the Housing of the Working Classes Acts appears not to have been brought under the consideration of the Council. I have requested that this may be done and that the Medical Officer of Health may be instructed to report on the subject.

Rural Auxiliary Postmen and the Committee of Inquiry.

MR. GEORGE ROBERTS (Norwich): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General, whether rural auxiliary postmen are included in the terms of reference to the Select Committee; if not, whether he will agree to the conditions of this important class of postal servants being included within the scope of the inquiry.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL (Mr. Sydney Buxton, Tower Hamlets, Poplar): I have no doubt that the Committee will consider auxiliary postmen to be one of the principal classes of Post Office Servants, and therefore included in their reference.

Bristol Post-Office Extension.

Mr. W. H. DAVIES (Bristol, S.): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General when the extension of the Bristol post-office is to be proceeded with, the land for which was purchased two years ago.

Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON: I hope that it will be possible to arrange for the work to be begun during the coming financial year.

Highland Telegraph Offices.

Mr. CATHCART WASON (Orkney and Shetland): I beg to ask the Postmaster General if he is aware that in many districts in the Highlands and Islands, where the telegraph office is in the merchant's ordinary place of business, it is practically impossible to send a telegram without being overlooked by ordinary customers; and if he will, as far as possible, insist that a certain amount of privacy be ensured.

Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON: I am not aware of any general complaint on the subject. I shall be much obliged if the hon. Member will bring to my notice any specific cases which need attention.

Savings Bank Buildings at Kensington.

Mr. STANGER (Kensington, N.): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether his attention has been drawn to the defective ventilation in the Savings Bank Department at Kensington; and whether he has made inquiries into the matter.

Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON: My attention has been drawn to this matter. In view of the statement made by the Press in regard to defective ventilation, the First Commissioner of Works at once instituted an inquiry into the matter. The result of the inquiry shows that the statement is without foundation. I have personally visited the building and the ventilation appears to me excellent. I may add that the average of sick absences in the Savings Bank Buildings is lower than in any other branch of the Post Office.

Post Office Committee of Inquiry.

Mr. CAIRNS (Newcastle-on-Tyne): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether the Select Committee appointed to inquire into the remuneration of postal and telegraph employees will take into account the high cost of living in some provincial towns as compared with others; and will full inquiry be made when such cases are put forward by the employees.

Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON: It will be for the Committee to decide what evidence should be admitted.

Telegraph Learners and the Committee of Inquiry.

Mr. DELANY (Queen's County, Ossory): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether the terms of reference of the Committee of Inquiry into the alleged grievances of the Post Office staff will include the case of the learners.

Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON: It will not, I hope, be necessary for the Committee to deal with the case of the telegraph learners, for I am glad to announce that I have been able to carry out a scheme which will materially improve the position of telegraph learners. The details of the scheme as regards the pay have been published to the staff in the Post Office Circular, a copy of which I will forward to the hon. Member.

Walsall Post Office Division.

Major DUNNE (Walsall): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether the revision of the telegraph staff at Walsall is yet complete; and, if so, whether he can state when the proposed benefits, resulting from the revision, will be applied to the staff.

Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON: Before settling the scheme for the revision of the indoor force at Walsall it has been necessary to consider the details at some length. These details have now been practically settled, and I hope soon to be in a position to carry out the revision.

No Free Postage for Members of Parliament.

Mr. KEIR HARDIE (Merthyr Tydvil): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether he has considered the advisability of appointing a small Committee to report upon the practicability of enabling Members of Parliament to frank letters posted within the precincts of the House, and what safeguards may be necessary to prevent the system being abused.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN, (Stirling Burghs): No, Sir, I am not favourable to this proposal. Remembering past experience, I do not think that to revive the privilege of franking letters is either a convenient or an unobjectionable mode of easing the burden on Members, and the actual relief would be small.

MR. KEIR HARDIE: My Question asks for the appointment of a small Committee to consider the practicability of the proposal. Will the right hon. Gentleman not agree to that?

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I do not think the House itself has expressed any desire in this matter, and I have already stated my view. I do not consider the appointment of a Committee necessary.

Inland Revenue Promotions.

MR. MEEHAN (Queen's County, Leix): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, in reference to the case of the second class supervisor appointed over 100 of his seniors, if he will state what were the special qualifications this officer possessed; was he given special opportunity to qualify as a specialist by being employed at the same class of work; did he, while he was still a second class supervisor, get special treatment in being retained in London district, which district many of his seniors were entitled to and anxious to get; and will an undertaking be given that if this officer be promoted to the rank of inspector when his special knowledge will be no longer required, he shall not take precedence over his official seniors who may be promoted at the same time.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. MCKENNA, Monmouthshire, N.): (1) The special qualifications possessed by the officer in question are exceptional intelligence, exceptional knowledge, and exceptional zeal. (2) He had not been given special opportunities for the display or the development of these qualities, but has utilised such opportunities as have come in his way. (3) There were no applications from his seniors for appointment to the London district in which he was retained. (4) If this officer be promoted he will take precedence, relatively to others who passed for promotion at the same time, in accordance with his relative seniority as a supervisor. The Chairman of the Board of Inland Revenue will be happy to give the hon. Member any further information on this subject which he may desire.

Scottish Local Administration.

MR. MUNRO FERGUSON (Leith Burghs): I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland whether, with a view to bringing Scottish Central Boards and Commissioners into closer touch with public opinion and requirements, he will hold a departmental inquiry to report on the modifications in the existing system that may be necessary to secure for such authorities a measure of efficiency and of co-ordination corresponding to their increasing responsibilities.

THE SECRETARY FOR SCOTLAND (Mr. SINCLAIR, Forfarshire): The proposal of the hon. Gentleman shall be borne in mind, and I appreciate its purpose, but I cannot at the present time give any undertaking in regard to it.

Scottish Teachers' Superannuation.

MR. CATHCART WASON: I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland if he can state how many existing teachers accepted The Superannuation Act, 1898, and how many declined to accept it; what amount existing teachers who accepted the Act will receive by way of retiring allowance, and what would be the cost to the Department of supplementing that amount by a sum sufficient to raise the retiring allowance to that considered adequate by the department for certificated teachers.

MR. SINCLAIR: Seven thousand five hundred and sixty-two "existing teachers" accepted the Act and 3,238 declined to accept it. The retiring allowance is calculated according to the length of service in each case. It is not possible to form the estimate asked for in the last clause of the hon. Member's Question.

Dublin Museum.

MR. JAMES CAMPBELL (Dublin University): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury why the Reports of the Board of Visitors and the Director of the Dublin Museum for the year ending 31st March, 1905, have not yet been laid before Parliament.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. BRYCE, Aberdeen, S.): The Reports in question will be published in the fifth Annual Report of the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction, which is in the Press, and will shortly be presented to Parliament. The preceding year's Report was presented in May of last year.

Irish Land Commission Administration.

MR. CLANCY (Dublin County, N.): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether his attention has been directed to the judgments delivered by Mr. Commissioner Finucane and Mr. Commissioner Bailey, of the Irish Land Commission, on the 17th January, 1906, in the case of the Downey-Martin Estate; whether he is aware that Mr. Commissioner Finucane stated *inter alia*, on that occasion, that the Crown had not, he believed, since the time of James the First, claimed the power or right to interpret the law for judicial authorities, but that power, though not explicitly claimed, was implicitly exercised in the Regulations issued by the late Government for the guidance of the Estates Commissioners in the administration by them of the Irish Land Act of 1903; and whether an opportunity will be given, by the appointment of a Select Committee of the House or otherwise, to investigate fully the circumstances attending this attempt to override and supersede the law by the late administration.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I am informed that the Estates Commissioners referred to in the Question delivered a judgment stating that in their opinion the Regulations issued by the late Government for the guidance of the Commissioners went beyond the powers given to them by the Irish Land Act of 1903, but these Regulations have now been withdrawn by the Lord-Lieutenant, and new Regulations substituted. I do not think that a necessity exists for the appointment of a Select Committee, as suggested by the hon. Member.

Shannon Fisheries.

MR. JOYCE (Limerick): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether he will grant the Return standing in the name of the hon. Member for Limerick City, *re* rents Shannon Fisheries.†

MR. McKENNA: I have explained by letter to the hon. Member the reason why I am unable to grant this Return.

MR. JOYCE: Why not state it here?

Parliamentary Printing and Stationery Vote.

MR. HAROLD COX (Preston): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury what has been the increase in the annual Vote for stationery and printing during the past ten years, as compared with the increase during the previous ten years; and whether he will consider the desirability of appointing either a Select Committee or a Departmental Committee to go through the list of Government publications, with a view to reducing their number and size; and to report as to the best means of keeping down the cost of printing and stationery in future years.

MR. McKENNA: During the past ten years the increase has been £131,095, during the previous decade it was £138,966. I am authorised by the Prime Minister to agree to the appointment of a Select Committee to inquire into the possibility of reducing the number and cost of these publications.

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† MR. JOYCE: River Shannon (Rents). Return of the amount of money received by the Board of Works in Ireland as rents or compensation for redundant waters supplied for mills, or other purposes, under the provisions of the Act 2 and 3 Victoria, c. 61; the amount of money received by the said Board of Works in rents for mills, lands, fisheries, or other property (other than canals), under the said Act for the year 1866 and the year 1905; the names of the fisheries, if any, other than eel fisheries, which have been leased or sold; and the names of the lessees or purchasers, if any, of such fisheries on the Shannon between Limerick and Castle Connel.

Dublin Museum Refreshment Room.

Mr. JAMES CAMPBELL: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury if orders have been issued for the discontinuance of the refreshment room which has been established for the use of visitors to the Dublin Museum, and of persons attending the adjoining Institutions of Science and Art; whether the Board of Visitors have strongly protested against the discontinuance, as certain to cause the greatest inconvenience to visitors and students; and will he cause further inquiry to be made before final action is taken.

Mr. McKENNA: These orders have been given as a result of a general inquiry instituted by the Treasury into the needs of the National Library. I understand that the Board of Visitors protested to the Department of Agriculture, but that the Department did not support them, and I see no reason for any further inquiry.

Dublin College of Science.

Mr. JAMES CAMPBELL: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury if, notwithstanding several applications by the Board of Visitors of the Dublin Museum for an inspection of the plans for the new College of Science, which it is proposed to erect within close proximity to the Museum, such inspection has been refused; and whether he will secure to the Board of Visitors an opportunity of inspecting these plans before the building is commenced.

Mr. McKENNA: The plans referred to were approved by the responsible department, namely, the Department of Agriculture, who had due regard to the interests of the Dublin Museum. I understand that work has already begun, and in these circumstances I see no reason for suggesting that the plans should be referred to the Board of Works.

Irish Education Grant.

Mr. FLYNN (Cork, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether he can say how much of the increase of £645,000 of the charge for elementary education in Great Britain is owing to the larger number of children in the schools, and how much to other causes; is he aware that for the purposes of elementary education for the coming financial year England will receive from the public exchequer 7s. 7d. per head of population, Scotland 7s. 9¾d., and Ireland 6s. 5d.; and whether, in view of these figures, the Treasury will be prepared to consider favourably the application of the Irish Board of Education for increased necessary expenditure.

Mr. McKENNA: The matter is one that cannot conveniently or usefully be discussed by Question and Answer. I may, however, mention that I cannot admit the accuracy of the hon. Member's figures.

Mr. FLYNN: Where is the inaccuracy?

Mr. McKENNA: The discussion on the Estimates will afford a more convenient opportunity of explaining that.

Carrigallen (Leitrim) Postal Arrangements.

Mr. T. SMITH (Leitrim, S.): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether, owing to the inconvenience that exists in Carrigallen, county Leitrim, in not having a midday delivery of letters, he will have a second delivery of letters granted, as Carrigallen is only six miles from Killeshandra, where there is a second delivery, and consequently the extra expense would be very small.

Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON: As the cost of the postal service now afforded at Carrigallen is already high compared with the amount of the correspondence, I regret that I am unable to grant a second delivery in the day unless the residents are prepared to bear the additional expense, which is estimated at about £27 a year.

South African Securities.

Mr. STRAUS (Tower Hamlets, Mile End): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he is aware that the recent depreciation in the value of South African securities is due to certain mining magnates bearing shares, in other words selling with the sole intention of depressing the market and repurchasing at a lower price; and whether he proposes to bring in legislation that would put a stop to this in the future.

Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I am not aware of the facts alleged in the

Question, nor do I see how legislation could put a stop to such practices.

Reduction of Armaments.

MR. ALDEN (Middlesex, Tottenham): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether, in view of the fact that Germany, following the example of England, has decided largely to increase her Navy, he will, in accordance with his expressed opinions on the subject by the simultaneous reduction of armament by negotiations with Foreign Powers, take the first opportunity of approaching the German Government in furtherance of this desirable object.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Perhaps my hon. friend the Member for East Finsbury will allow me to answer his Question at the same time.† I assume that the increase of the German Navy depends upon the view which the German Government take of the needs of their Empire and commerce generally. I have openly expressed my opinion in favour of a general reduction of armaments, and I can assure my hon. friend that no favourable opportunity will be lost of facilitating that result.

French Naval Policy.

MR. KING (Cheshire, Knutsford): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury if his attention has been called to the speech of the French Minister of the Marine in the Chamber, Paris, on 7th March, that, in consequence of the shipbuilding programmes of the Governments of Germany and Great Britain, the French programme would be increased by the addition of six new battleships of 18,000 tons and with a speed of 18 knots; and whether he proposes to take steps, either at the forthcoming Hague Conference or directly, to put a stop to this burdensome competition between the shipbuilding programmes of the Great Powers concerned.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I have not been able to find in the report of the speech referred to which appeared in the French *Journal Officiel* the statement quoted by the hon. Member. As regards the attitude of His Majesty's Government on the question of the limitation of naval armaments, I can only refer the hon. Member to the Answer I have just given to the Question put by the hon. Member for the Tottenham Division of Middlesex.

Canadian Tariffs.

MR. T. M. HEALY: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury if, before the motion respecting the admission of Canadian store cattle is discussed, he would cause placards to be hung in the Tea Room showing the articles of British and Irish manufacture on which a tariff is imposed in the Dominion, and the amount thereof.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I think that the facts in this matter are sufficiently well known, and there is no necessity to disfigure the Tea Room.

The Mining Disaster in France.

MR. KEIR HARDIE: I beg to ask the Prime Minister whether it is intended to give the House any opportunity of expressing its sympathy with the miners of France in the terrible disaster which has befallen them; and whether the right hon. Gentleman has any later information concerning the extent of the disaster which he could communicate to the House.

MR. ASHLEY: I also wish to ask whether an expression of British sympathy with the victims of the disaster can be conveyed officially to the Government of the French Republic.

SIR H. CAMBPELL-BANNERMAN: I have received notice of a similar Question from my hon. friend the Member for Rotherham, and I think I cannot do better than read the following despatch which my right hon. friend the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs yesterday sent to our Ambassador in Paris:—"Please express to the French Government the deep concern of His Majesty's Government at the terrible disaster at Courrieres les Lens and their sympathy with the survivors." I do not know that it would be usual or even necessary after this to contemplate any formal statement on the part of the House of its feelings in the matter. I have no later information to give the House.

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† The following is the second Question referred to by the Prime Minister:

MR. BAKER (Finsbury, E.): To ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether, considering the fact that Germany, following the example of Great Britain, and now France, following the examples of both Great Britain and Germany, have decided to extend their naval armaments, he will take an early opportunity of approaching these and other Foreign Powers, with a view to effecting a mutual and simultaneous reduction.

The Order of Questions.

MR. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford) asked the Prime Minister whether his attention had been called to the serious scandal which had arisen with reference to Questions; whether he was aware that to-day was the third or fourth occasion on which less than half the Questions on the paper had been reached within the allotted time; when the Government intended to make any proposals on the subject, and whether he could suggest to the Committee on Procedure that this was one of the subjects that ought to be dealt with at once by an interim Report.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: No doubt the subject of Questions and the rules as to putting Questions will come under the consideration of the Committee; but with regard to the immediate state of affairs in the House, the gravity of which I fully recognise, I believe there are twelve Departments, large and small, to the heads of which Questions can be addressed in the House, and the Irish Questions will come first upon one day in the week, but hon. Members from Ireland must not expect to have that prominent position on other days of the week. This arrangement has been made for the convenience of Members and also for the saving of the time of the House.

MR. T. M. HEALY: By what authority is this done?

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: It is by arrangement.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Then there is no authority.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN said it was for the convenience of Members of the House as well as Ministers that Questions should be grouped.

MR. JOHN REDMOND denied that there was any arrangement by consent. He had not agreed that Irish Questions should only be taken once a week. This was an irregular arrangement, and he would ask the Prime Minister to see that it was one of the earliest points dealt with by the Procedure Committee.

MR. T. M. HEALY appealed to the Speaker to protect the rights of the minority, and refuse the sanction of the Chair to any arrangement to which the House had not given assent.

*MR. SPEAKER said this arrangement had been in force for two years——

MR. DILLON: No; only since the beginning of the session.

MR. T. M. HEALY: It has no sanction from the House.

*MR. SPEAKER: The sentence I began, I will now continue—I say the grouping of questions is no new arrangement. Probably the best course would be to continue the system until the Procedure Committee could advise the House.

THE FISCAL DEBATE.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN (Birmingham, W.): I wish to ask the First Lord of the Treasury two Questions with regard to business this evening. In the first place, with regard to the Motion which he has put upon the Paper for the suspension of the twelve o'clock rule, may I assume that it is not intended to prolong the debate, and that the object is merely to prevent the automatic interruption of a speech which may be in progress at the hour of twelve o'clock? The second Question is whether, having regard to the importance of the discussion raised by the Motion of the hon. Baronet the Member for Colne Valley, and to the variety of subjects, also of great importance, raised by the Amendment on the Paper, the right hon. Gentleman has satisfied himself that it will be quite impossible to close the debate to-night.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: So far as I am able to ascertain the general feeling of the House, I think there is a desire that more than one day should be given to this discussion, and, therefore, it is not my intention to move the Motion which stands in my name; but I have two, not exactly conditions, but hopes to express. One is that we shall be allowed, if necessary, in the course of the next week or two, to suspend the twelve o'clock rule at least one day oftener than we expected to do, on account of the exigencies of Supply, in consequence of the additional day being given for the purpose of this debate. In the second place, I hope we may have a division on the main question before dinner to-morrow, and that the discussion of any Amendment which may be under consideration will be brought to a close in sufficient time to enable that to be done.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: With regard to the first question or hope expressed by the right hon. Gentleman, I am quite sure we shall be glad to give him any assistance that may be really necessary in order to deal with the emergencies of Supply; but probably it would be better to address a Question on that subject to-morrow to my right hon. friend the Leader of the Opposition, who will then be in his place. As regards the second question, I must say that I think the right hon. Gentleman is extremely sanguine if he thinks that a debate which has been given such exceptional importance by the action of the Government itself, and has raised so very many matters of the greatest possible interest, can be brought to a close by to-morrow at dinner time. I cannot give him any hope that we can help him in that direction, nor can I believe that those who have put down Amendments, whether on this side of the House or the other, would be willing that the debate should be prematurely brought to a close under these circumstances.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: If that is the view taken by the right hon. Gentleman and his friends, I can only fall back on my original intention and move the Motion which stands in my name.

ADMINISTRATION OF THE ALIENS ACT.

SIR W. EVANS GORDON: I wish to ask leave to move the adjournment of the House for the purpose of calling attention to a matter of urgent public importance—namely, the announcement by the Home Secretary that the Goverment intend by administrative changes to set aside the provisions of the Aliens (Immigration) Act of 1905, which came into force on January 1 this year.

*MR. SPEAKER: In my opinion this matter can be raised, and will properly be raised, on the consideration of the Vote on account which stands on the paper to-day. Even if it is not reached to-day or to-morrow, it will almost certainly be taken on Wednesday or Thursday. In my opinion that will offer sufficient opportunity to the hon. Member to raise the Question.

OLD-AGE PENSIONS (No. 2) BILL.

Order for Second Reading upon Wednesday read, and discharged. Bill withdrawn.

NEW MEMBER SWORN.

The right hon. Arthur James Balfour, for the City of London.

One other Member took and subscribed the Oath.

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

Sunday Trading, That they have come to the following Resolution, viz.: That it is desirable that a Joint Committee of both Houses be appointed to inquire into the subject of Sunday Trading.

NEW BILLS.

SALMON FISHERIES (IRELAND) BILL.

"To amend the Law relating to Boards of Conservators of Fisheries in Ireland," presented by Mr. Joyce; supported by Mr. Boland, Mr. Flavin, Mr. Halpin, Mr. O'Shee, Mr. Cullinan, and Mr. Lundon; to be read a second time upon Monday, 26th March, and to be printed. [Bill 90.]

MUNICIPAL POWERS BILL.

"To enlarge the Powers of Local Authorities in respect of the purchase of land, the building of houses, and the acquisition or establishment of trading undertakings," presented by Mr. Money;

supported by Sir Charles Dilke, Mr. Alden, Mr. Gooch, and Mr. Henderson; to be read a second time upon Monday, 26th March, and to be printed. [Bill 91.]

EDUCATION (PROVISION OF MEALS) (SCOTLAND) BILL.

"To amend the Education (Scotland) Acts, 1872 to 1893," presented by Mr. Barnes; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 92.]

STATUTE LAW REVISION (SCOTLAND) BILL.

"To further promote the Revision of the Statute Law by repealing enactments which have ceased to be in force or have become unnecessary," presented by The Lord Advocate; supported by Mr. Solicitor-General for Scotland; to be read a second time To-morrow, and to be printed. [Bill 94.]

SEED POTATOES SUPPLY (IRELAND) BILL.

"To make provision with respect to loans and sales made for the purpose of the Supply of Seed Potatoes to occupiers and cultivators of land in Ireland," presented by Mr. Bryce; to be read a second time To-morrow and to be printed. [Bill 93.]

BUTTER TRADE.

Mr. Dalziel, Sir Edwin Cornwall, Mr. Courthope, Mr. Lonsdale, Mr. Steadman, Major M'Micking, Mr. Scott, Mr. James Stuart, Mr. Osmond Williams, Sir Edward Strachey, Mr. Warner, Viscount Morpeth, Mr. Hicks Beach, Mr. Flynn, and Mr. Lundon were nominated Members of the Select Committee on the Butter Trade.

Ordered, That the Committee have power to send for persons, papers, and records.

Ordered, That Five be the quorum.—(*Sir Edward Strachey.*)

FREE TRADE AND FISCAL REFORM.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN moved, "That the proceedings on the Motion relating to free trade, if under discussion at 12 o'clock this night, be not interrupted under the Standing Orders (Sittings of the House)." In doing so he said—The House will allow me to say that I make this Motion with the view, pointed to by the right hon. Member for Birmingham, of preventing any abrupt termination to-night; but any inquiries I have been able to make have confirmed me in my first estimate of the feeling of the House, that there is a desire for two days discussion, and I can only hope that the right hon. Gentleman will agree with the view, which I expressed before, as to the expediency of bringing the matter to a close decently and in order before the dinner hour to-morrow.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the proceedings on the Motion relating to Free Trade, if under discussion at Twelve o'clock this night, be not interrupted under the Standing Order (Sittings of the House)."—(*Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman.*)

MR. A. J. BALFOUR (City of London): I agree with the right hon. Gentleman in hoping that the matter will be brought to a termination decently and in order; but I cannot hold out any hope that we on this side of the House think that one and a half day's debate will be adequate for dealing with a subject which he has, with the best intention no doubt, but gratuitously, brought forward.

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 362; Noes, 113. (Division List No. 10.)

AYES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
Acland, Francis Dyke
Adkins, W. Ryland
Agar-Robartes, Hon. T. C.
Agnew, George William
Alden, Percy
Armitage, R.
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Astbury, John Meir
Baker, Sir John (Portsmouth)
Balfour, Robert (Lanark)
Baring, Godfrey (Isle of Wight)
Barker, John
Barlow, John E. (Somerset)
Barlow, Percy (Bedford)
Barnard, E. B.
Barnes, G. N.
Barran, Rowland Hirst
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Beale, W. P.
Beauchamp, E.
Beaumont, Hubert (Eastbourne
Beaumont, W. C. B. (Hexham)
Beck, A. Cecil

Bellairs, Carlyon
Bean, W.(T'w'rHamlets,S.Geo.
Berridge, T. H. D.
Bertram, Julius
Bethell, T. R. (Essex, Maldon)
Billson, Alfred
Birrell, Rt. Hon. Augustine
Black, Arthur W. (Bedfordsh.
Boland, John
Bottomley, Horatio
Branch, James
Brocklehurst, W. D.
Brodie, H. C.
Brooke, Stopford
Brunner, J. F. L.(Lancs.,Leigh
Bryce, Rt.Hn.James(Aberdeen
Bryce, J. A. (Inverness Burghs
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Buckmaster, Stanley O.
Burns, Rt. Hon. John
Burnyeat, J. D. W.
Burt, Rt. Hon. Thomas
Buxton, Rt.Hn.SydneyCharles
Cairns, Thomas
Caldwell, James
Cameron, Robert
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H.
Carr-Gomm, H. W.
Causton,Rt.Hn.RichardKnight
Cawley, Frederick
Chance, Frederick William
Channing, Francis Allston
Cheetham, John Frederick
Cherry, R. R.
Churchill, Winston Spencer
Clancy, John Joseph
Cleland, J. W.
Clough, W.
Coats, Sir T.Glen(Renfrew,W.)
Cobbold, Felix Thornley
Cogan, Denis J.
Collins, Stephen (Lambeth)
Collins,Sir Wm.J.(S.Pancras,W
Corbett,C H(Sussex,E,Grinst'd
Cornwall, Sir Edwin A.
Cory, Clifford John
Cotton, Sir H. J. S.
Cowan, W. H.
Cox, Harold
Craig, Herbert J. (Tynemouth)
Crean, Eugene
Crombie, John William
Crooks, William
Crosfield, A. H.
Cullinan, J.
Dalmeny, Lord
Dalziel, James Henry
Davies, M. Vaughan- (Cardigan
Davies, Timothy (Fulham)
Davies, W. Howell (Bristol, S.)
Delany, William
Devlin,CharlesRamsay(Galway
Dewar John A. (Inverness-sh.
Dickinson, W. H.(St.Pancr'sN.
Dickson-Poynder, Sir John P.
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Dillon, John
Dobson, Thomas W.
Dolan, Charles Joseph
Donelan, Captain A.
Duckworth, James
Duffy, William J.
Dunn, A. Edward (Camborne)
Dunne, Major E. M. (Walsall)
Edwards, Frank (Radnor)
Elibank, Master of
Ellis, Rt. Hon. John Edward
Erskine, David C.
Esmonde, Sir Thomas
Essex, R. W.
Evans, Samuel T.
Everett, R. Lacey
Faber, G. H. (Boston)
Fenwick, Charles
Ferens, T. R.
Ferguson, R. C. Munro
Fiennes, Hon. Eustace
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Flynn, James Christopher
Foster, Rt. Hon. Sir Walter
Fowler, Rt. Hon. Sir Henry
Fuller J. M. F.
Furness, Sir Christopher
Gardner,Col.A. (Herefordsh. S.)
Gibb, James (Harrow)
Gilhooly, James
Gill, A. H.
Ginnell, L.
Gladstone,Rt.Hn.Herbert John
Glendinning, R. G.
Gooch, George Peabody
Greenwood, G. (Peterborough)
Greenwood, Hamar (York)
Grove, Archibald
Gulland, John W.
Haldane, Rt. Hon. Richard B.
Hall, Frederick
Halpin, J.
Hammond, John
Harcourt, Rt. Hon. Lewis
Hardie,J.Keir(Merthyr Tydvil
Hardy, George A. (Suffolk)
Harmsworth, Cecil B. (Worc'r)
Harrington, Timothy
Hart-Davies, T.
Haslam, James (Derbyshire)
Haslam, Lewis (Monmouth)
Haworth, Arthur A.
Hazleton, Richard
Healy, Timothy Michael
Hedges, A. Paget
Helme, Norval Watson
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Henderson,J.M.(Aberdeen W.)
Henry, Charles, S.
Herbert, Colonel Ivor (Mon.,S.)
Herbert, T. Arnold (Wycombe)
Higham, John Sharp
Hobart, Sir Robert
Hogan, Michael
Holden, E. Hopkinson
Hooper, A. G.
Hope, John Deans (Fife, West)
Hope, W.Bateman(SomersetN.
Horridge, Thomas Gardiner
Howard, Hon. Geoffrey
Hyde, Clarendon
Idris, T. H. W.
Jackson, R. S.
Jacoby, James Alfred
Jardine, Sir J.
Jones,David Brynmor(Swansea
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Jones,William (Carnarvonshire
Jowett, F W.
Joyce, Michael
Kearley, Hudson, E.
Kekewich, Sir George
Kennedy, Vincent Paul
Kilbride, Denis
Kincaid-Smith, Captain
King, Alfred John (Knutsford)
Kitson, Sir James
Laidlaw, Robert
Lamb, Edmund G. (Leominster
Lambert George
Lamont, Norman
Law, Hugh Alexander
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Lea, Hugh Cecil (St.Pancras,E.
Leese, Sir JosephF.(Accrington
Lehmann, R. C.
Lever, A.Levy (Essex,Harwich
Lever, W. H.(Cheshire,Wirral)
Levy, Maurice
Lewis, John Herbert
Lloyd-George, Rt. Hon. David
Lough, Thomas
Lundon, W.
Lupton, Arnold
Lyell, Charles Henry
Macdonald, J. R. (Leicester)
Macdonald,J.M.(Falkirk B'ghs
Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
Macpherson, J. T.
MacVeagh, Jeremiah (Down,S.
MacVeigh,Charles (Donegal,E.)
M'Crae, George
M'Kenna, Reginald
M'Laren, H. D. (Stafford, W.)
M'Micking, Major G.
Maddison, Frederick
Manfield, Harry (Northants)
Marks,G.Croydon (Launceston)
Marnham, F. J.
Massie, J.
Masterman, C. F. G.
Meehan, Patrick A.
Menzies, Walter
Micklem, Nathaniel
Molteno, Percy Alfred
Mond, A.
Money, L. G. Chiozza
Montagu, E. S.
Mooney, J. J.
Morgan, G. Hay (Cornwall
Morley, Rt. Hon. John
Morrell, Philip
Morse, L. L.
Murphy, John
Murray, James
Myer, Horatio
Newnes, F. (Notts, Bassetlaw)
Nicholls, George
Nicholson, CharlesN(Doncast'r
Nolan, Joseph
Norman, Henry
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
Nuttall, Harry
O'Brien,Kendal(Tipperary Mid
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Brien, William (Cork)
O'Connor,James (Wicklow, W)
O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)

O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
O'Doherty, Philip
O'Dowd, John
O'Hare, Patrick
O'Kelly, Conor (Mayo, N.)
O'Kelly, James (Roscommon N.
O'Malley, William
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
Palmer, Sir Charles Mark
Parker, James (Halifax)
Paul, Herbert
Paulton, James Mellor
Pearce, Robert (Staffs. Leek)
Pearce, William (Limehouse)
Perks, Robert William
Philipps, Col. Ivor (S'thampton)
Philipps, J. Wynford (Pembroke
Philipps, Owen C. (Pembroke)
Pickersgill, Edward Hare
Pirie, Duncan V.
Price, C. E. (Edinb'gh, Central)
Price, Robert John (Norfolk, E.
Priestley, Arthur (Grantham)
Priestley, W.E.B. (Bradford E.)
Radford, G. H.
Rainy, A. Rolland
Raphael, Herbert H.
Rea, Russell (Gloucester
Rea, Walter Russell (Scarboro'
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Redmond, William (Clare)
Rees, J. D.
Rendall, Athelstan
Renton, Major Leslie
Richards, T. F. (Wolverh'mptn
Rickett, J. Compton
Ridsdale, E. A.
Roberts, Charles H. (Lincoln)
Roberts, G. H. (Norwich)
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs)
Robertson, Rt. Hn. E. (Dundee
Robertson, J. M. (Tyneside)
Robertson, Sir G Scott (Bradf'rd
Robinson, S.
Robson, Sir William Snowden
Roche, Augustine (Cork)
Roche, John (Galway, East)
Rose, Charles Day
Rowlands, J.
Runciman, Walter
Rutherford, V. H. (Brentford)
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Samuel, S. M. (Whitechapel)
Scarisbrick, T. T. L.
Schwann, C. Duncan (Hyde)
Schwann, Chas. E. (Manchester)
Scott, A. H. (Ashton under Lyne
Sears, J. E.
Seaverns, J. H.
Seddon, J.
Seely, Major J. B.
Shackleton, David James
Shaw, Rt. Hon. T. (Hawick B.)
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Sinclair, Rt. Hon. John
Smeaton, Donald Mackenzie
Smyth, Thomas (Leitrim, S.
Snowden, P.
Spicer, Albert
Stanger, H. Y.
Stanley, Hn. A. Lyulph (Chesh.)
Steadman, H. C.
Stewart, Halley (Greenock)
Strachey, Sir Edward
Straus, B. S. (Mile End)
Strauss, E. A. (Abingdon)
Stuart, James (Sunderland)
Sullivan, Donal
Sutherland, J. E.
Taylor, Austin (East Toxteth)
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
Tennant, E. P. (Salisbury)
Tennant, H. J. (Berwichshire)
Thomas, Abel (Carmarthen, E.)
Thomas, Sir A. (Glamorgan, E.)
Thorne, William
Tomkinson, James
Torrance, A. W.
Toulmin, George
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Verney, F. W.
Villiers, Ernest Amherst
Vivian, Henry
Wadsworth, J.
Waldron, Laurence Ambrose
Walker, H. De R. (Leicester)
Wallace, Robert
Walsh, Stephen
Walton, Sir John L. (Leeds, S.)
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
Ward, W. Dudley (Southampt'n
Wardle, George J.
Wason, Eugene (Clackmannan)
Wason, John Cathcart (Orkney)
Waterlow, D. S.
Watt, H. Anderson
Wedgwood, Josiah C.
Whitbread, Howard
White, J. D. (Dumbartonshire)
Whitehead, Rowland
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Wilkie, Alexander
Williams, Osmond (Merioneth)
Williams, W. L. (Carmarthen)
Wills, Arthur Walters
Wilson, J. W. (Worcestersh. N.)
Wilson, P. W. (St. Pancras, S.)
Wilson, W. T. (Westhoughton)
Wodehouse, Lord (Norfolk, Mid)
Woodhouse, Sir J T. (Huddersf'd
Young, Samuel

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Mr. George Whiteley and Mr. J. A. Pease.

NOES.

Anson, Sir William Reynell
Anstruther-Gray, Major
Arnold-Forster, Rt. Hn. Hugh O
Ashley, W. W.
Aubrey-Fletcher, Rt. Hn. Sir H.
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt Hn A. J. (City Lond.)
Balfour, Capt. C. B. (Hornsey)
Baring, Hon. Guy (Winchester)
Barrie, H. T. (Londonderry, N.)
Beach, Hn. Michael Hugh Hicks
Beckett, Hon. Gervase
Bowles, G. Stewart
Bridgeman, W. Clive
Brotherton, Edward Allen
Bull, Sir William James
Burdett-Coutts, W.
Butcher, Samuel Henry
Campbell, J. H. M. (Dublin Univ.
Carlile, E. Hildred
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Castlereagh, Viscount
Cave, George
Cavendish, Rt. Hon. Victor C. W.
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Cecil, Lord J. P. J. (Stamford)
Cecil, Lord R. (Marylebone, E.)
Chamberlain, Rt. Hon. J. (Birm.
Chamberlain, Rt Hn J. A. (Worc.
Clarke, Sir Edward (C'ty London
Coates, E. Feetham (Lewisham
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Courthope, G. Loyd
Craig, Charles Curtis (Antrim, S
Craig, Captain James (Down, E.)
Craik, Sir Henry
Cross, Alexander
Dalrymple, Viscount
Dixon-Hartland, Sir Fred Dixon
Doughty, Sir George
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Du Cros, Harvey
Duncan, Robert (Lanark, Govan
Faber, George Denison (York)
Fardell, Sir T. George
Fell, Arthur
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Gardner, Ernest (Berks, East
Gibbs, G. A. (Bristol, West)
Gordon, J. (Londonderry, S.)
Gordon, Sir W. Evans (T'r Ham.
Haddock, George R.
Hamilton, Marquess of
Hardy, Laurence (Kent, Ashf'rd
Harrison-Broadley, Col. H. B.
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Hervey, F. W. F. (Bury S. Edm'ds
Hill, Henry Staveley (Staff'sh.)
Hills, J. W.
Houston, Robert Paterson
Hunt, Rowland
Kennaway, Rt. Hon. Sir John H.
Kenyon-Slaney, Rt. Hon. Col W.
Kimber, Sir Henry
King, Sir Henry Seymour (Hull
Lambton, Hon. Frederick Wm.
Lee, Arthur H. (Hants., Fareham
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Liddell, Henry
Lockwood, Rt. Hn. Lt.-Col. A. R.
Lowe, Sir Francis William
MacIver, David (Liverpool)
Magnus, Sir Philip
Marks, Harry Hananel (Kent)
Mason, James F. (Windsor)
Meysey-Thompson, Major E. C.
Mildmay, Francis Bingham
Morpeth, Viscount

Muntz, Sir Philip A.
Nield, Herbert
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Parker, Sir Gilbert (Gravesend)
Parkes, Ebenezer
Pease, Herbert Pike(Darlington
Percy, Earl
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Rasch, Sir Frederick Carne
Rawlinson, John Frederick P.
Remnant, James Farquharson
Roberts, S.(Sheffield, Ecclesall
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Rothschild, Hon. Lionel Walter
Rutherford, John (Lancashire)
Sandys, Lieut.-Col. Thos. Myles
Sassoon, Sir Edward Albert
Scott, Sir S. (Marylebone, W.)
Sloan, Thomas Henry
Smith, Abel H.(Hertford, East)
Smith, F.E. (Liverpool, Walton)
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (Strand)
Stanley, Hon. Arthur (Orm'kirk
Talbot, Rt. Hn. J.G.(Oxf'd Univ
Thomson, W. Mitchell-(Lanark)
Thornton, Percy M.
Turnour, Viscount
Vincent, Col. Sir C.E. Howard
Walrond, Hon. Lionel
Williamson, G. H. (Worcester)
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Wilson, A. Stanley (York, E.R.)
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C.B. Stuart-
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George
Younger, George

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Mr. Forster.

FREE TRADE.

*SIR JAMES KITSON (Yorks, W.R., Colne Valley) rose to move the following Resolution:—"That this House, recognizing that in the recent general election the people of the United Kingdom have demonstrated their unqualified fidelity to the principles and practice of free trade, deems it right to record its determination to resist any proposal, whether by way of taxation upon foreign corn or of the creation of a general tariff upon foreign goods, to create in this country a system of protection." As an old member of the House, he congratulated the Leader of the Opposition upon taking his seat once more, and hoped that in his position of greater freedom and less responsibility the right hon. Gentleman would long enjoy a repose that would be grateful to him. The Resolution was proposed in order that the decision at the late general election might be recorded on the proceedings of the House. The situation had changed since February 14—a date generally acknowledged to be a day of reconcilation—and the Party with whom he was associated regarded the declaration made by the late Prime Minister as an absolute concession to the views advocated by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham. Why was this question raised after all these years? His recollection took him back to the days before the repeal of the Corn Laws. He well remembered in 1842 seeing bands of workmen, prisoners, surrounded by cavalry, conveyed along the Leeds high road to Wakefield Jail during what were called the Plug riots. Five years later, in 1847, when the Corn Laws had been repealed, he saw bands of workmen marching along the road from Leeds to Wakefield to declare by their show of hands at Wakefield their adhesion to the principles of Corn Law repeal, and to elect Mr. Cobden as member for the West Riding. Mr. Cobden was returned although at that time he was absent in St. Petersburg. He was re-elected in 1852, and then wrote—

> "The feeling in the West Riding of Yorkshire is most intense amongst the working classes. They will never allow the Corn Laws to be reimposed."

What did the West Riding say to-day? The West Riding in Cobden's days had only two Members in Parliament. To-day it had nineteen county Divisions, and out of the representatives of those nineteen Divisions eighteen were Free Traders and one was a Unionist Free Trader; it had eighteen borough Divisions, represented by fourteen Free Traders, one Unionist Free Trader, and four Unionists. Following the election of 1852 there were sinister rumours during the ministry of Lord Derby as to the revival of Protection, and the re-imposition of the Corn Laws, and Cobden became very active. He wrote—

> "My object is to settle the Free Trade question for ever, and to clear the ground for other questions."

It was to settle the Free Trade question for ever, and clear the ground for other questions that they proposed this Resolution to-day. In consequence of the agitation he had referred to, Mr. Villiers raised the question in this House, and he elicited from Mr. Disraeli, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, a declaration that no taxes on corn would be imposed. And so the matter was disposed of by Resolution in this House, and rested for half a century until now. In the course of the recent campaign, many inducements were offered to free traders owing to declarations of decline in various staple industries of the country. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham told them that the cotton trade was declining, that the woollen trade was declining, and that the iron trade was going. As he

(Sir James) knew something of the iron trade, he might be permitted, as a representative of that declining industry, to tell the House that the total output of pig-iron in Great Britain last year was 9,500,000 tons, being an increase of 1,000,000 tons over 1904. The output for 1905 was the greatest in the history of the trade. It was idle, therefore, to tell them that the iron trade was going. On the contrary, the iron trade was still advancing, and advancing with rapid strides. On the authority of the *Iron and Steel Trades Review*, the editor of which was an expert on this subject, he might say that he could support the view of the President of the Local Government Board, that there would again be an expansion, as the calculations as to the furnaces in operation assured a production of no less than 10,000,000 tons in the year they were now entering. The prosperity of the iron trade was not only to be calculated on the amount of pig-iron now produced, but also upon the production in the steel trade. Whereas, over a period of fourteen years there was an increase in the production of pig-iron of 22 per cent., there was an increase in the production of steel of no less than 64 per cent. The year 1906 promised again an increase upon that quantity. Then there was shipbuilding, the output of which in 1905 showed an increase of 491,000 tons, or 20 per cent. over the production of 1904. The total world's increase was only 75,000 tons, against Great Britain's increase of 491,000 tons. The engineering record of the *Glasgow Herald*, in its review of the trade, said that the British horse-power produced was 1,500,000 tons, and the foreign horse-power 962,000 tons. There was a British increase of 162,000 tons, and a foreign decrease of 56,000 tons, so that it was idle again to say that the foreigners were gaining on us even in shipbuilding or in shipbuilding engineering. The imports of iron and steel, and the manufactures thereof—a question upon which their opponents laid considerable stress — which included machinery, steam engines, and locomotives, amounted to £21,180,000, showing an increase of nearly £2,000,000 on 1904. On the other hand, we exported iron and steel manufactures in 1904 to the value of £65,000,000, and in 1905 to the value of £74,000,000, or an increase of £9,000,000. If we had not imported that material we could not have done the business we did, and we could not have employed the work people we did. The Board of Trade had given some careful analyses of the returns, which he thought ought to be in the possession of the House. If hon. Members analysed this total of £21,000,000 of imports, they would find that £3,500,000 of it was in motors, in which a great trade was beginning in this country—a trade which very soon would capture that which had been a creation of the continent. Again, no less than £1,000,000 of the £21,000,000 came from iron and manufactured products of iron from Sweden, and these were absolutely necessary for the manufacture of the fine qualities of steel; so that if they placed a duty on these they would restrict the manufactures of steel for competition in the markets of the world. The Board of Trade had also furnished him with the destination of this large export of £75,000,000. Exports to foreign countries amounted to £47,900,000 and to British possessions £26,000,000, but of the latter £9,500,000 went to British India. So that in dealing with the question of Free Trade and Protection it would be seen that the foreign markets, including the markets of British India, Argentina, and others, far transcended the markets of the British Colonies. To the Argentine Republic we sent iron and products thereof, machinery and the rest, to the value of £5,500,000, and he would ask the House, if we were to give a preferential duty on corn for the benefit of Canada, what would Argentina say to us? Argentina was by far a better customer of iron and steel and manufactures thereof to us than any of the British possessions were or possibly could be. If such a preferential duty were given to the Colonies it would throw the Argentine trade into the hands of Germany, our great competitor. Hon. Members might ask why, in view of this good account of our exports, had we any unemployed? If they would examine the Board of Trade returns, and take the case of the home railways, they would find that the railways of Great Britain in the year 1900 added 734 locomotives to the rolling stock, but in 1904, owing to the diminution in the home trade, they only added fifty-eight. In the year 1898 the railways of Great Britain added 25,000 waggons to their rolling stock. In 1900 they added 20,000 waggons, but in 1904 they added only 5,000. The diminution in this rolling stock commenced precisely at the period of the outbreak of the Boer war. That was the reason why railway extensions were curtailed, rolling stock orders diminished, and large numbers of our population in the home trade thrown out of employment. Many statements had been made about dumping, illustrated by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham by references to steel bars and steel billets used in the manufacture of tin-plates. They could not have a better example of the value of free trade than an analysis of the figures relating to the trade in steel bars. In 1890 the McKinley tariff was established, and very quickly and entirely destroyed the tin-plate trade with the United States. The South Wales manufacturers made large sums of money out of this trade, and they devoted a large part of their profits to the installation of new machinery and the putting down of new plant in order to meet the strong competition in the markets of the world. He noticed that Sir John Jenkins, a great authority on this trade, had said that there was a regulation of prices, and the price of steel bars was £7 per ton. American competition sprang up, and 50,000 tons of steel billets in one order were sold at £4 10s. per ton, and upon this the tin-plate workers of South Wales were enabled to make a cheap tin-plate, with which they competed in the markets of the world, and what was the result ? That notwithstanding the high tariffs, the United States makers of tin-plate, had to go and sue *in formâ pauperis* to the United States Treasury to obtain a drawback, whereas in South Africa and our Colonies we had been able to sell cheaper canned meats and tinned fruits in the markets of the world. The makers of tin boxes and similar articles now obtained a drawback from the United States customs; and last year this amounted to £438,000. So that in order to keep themselves in competition with other makers of tin-plate goods they had had to acknowledge the principle of Free Trade, without which they would have lost their industry. With regard to this question of the dumping of billets, he had a letter from a shareholder in a company which manufactured tin-plates, bars, billets and blooms. The capital of this Company was £50,000 in £10 shares. The works were built in 1899–1900, and the Company did not publish or circulate a balance sheet, but he might mention that the dividend paid last year was 45 per cent. This was one of those trades which were subject to illegitimate competition. A £10 share in this Company was recently sold by auction for £38, so that before right hon. Gentlemen accepted these statements about illegitimate competition they should first carefully examine whether they were correct or not. The company he referred to was scientifically managed, and so was enabled to produce at very cheap rates. He did not think this House was interested in protecting old and obsolete concerns; they ought to be more interested in stimulating by legitimate competition scientific management and the ability to manufacture at the lowest possible price. They were appealed to the other day by the hon. Member for Central Sheffield on behalf of his unfortunate constituents. He might say that he visited Sheffield last year and went through some of the large iron and steel works there. He visited one works where they were producing steel of the highest quality, which they were exporting in large quantities to the United States, notwithstanding the very high duty which obtained there. The proprietor informed him that Sheffield was prospering, and that the increase of its rateable value had averaged £28,000 a year for the last five years, and it only required a simple calculation to ascertain that the capital value of that amounted to something like £1,000,000 per annum. And yet the hon. Gentleman opposite talked about his unfortunate constituents. The labour employed in producing this special kind of steel was mostly skilled labour, and the workmen earned from 7s to 8s per day. That was not sweated labour, although it was a very hot job. The state of the Sheffield trade and the effects of German tariffs upon it was illustrated by the fact that large works in Sheffield were extending their borders and increasing the size of their works, thus showing how much they were afraid of the foreign tariffs which the hon. Member for Central Sheffield was constantly bringing under the notice of the House. He was authorised by the Lord Mayor of Sheffield, who was a Conservative——

MR. SAMUEL ROBERTS (Sheffield, Ecclesall): No, No.

SIR HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central): Yes, he is.

*SIR JAMES KITSON said the Lord Mayor of Sheffield had refused to ask for any share of the Queen's Unemployed Fund on the ground that the number of unemployed in Sheffield was so small as to be below the normal average; and after searching investigation by the Distress Committee, the number of unemployed in Sheffield was found to be about 400 amongst a population of 430,000.

SIR HOWARD VINCENT. The correct figure is 2,000.

*SIR JAMES KITSON said his authority was the Lord Mayor of Sheffield. He wished to point out to the House that the hon. Member for Central Sheffield was himself the director at the present moment of a prosperous Sheffield company, which last year paid a dividend of 22½ per cent. He noticed in *The Times* to-day that, notwithstanding the fear of foreign tariffs, the price of £1 shares in that company now stood at £4. Therefore it was idle for the hon. Member to treat this question in the way he did. Two years ago he addressed the House upon this question when trade was not so good; he then told the House that the best thing manufacturers could do was to put their house in order, and he ventured to give a description of a continuous process of making steel. That process had now been established through several large works in this country, and it enabled native ores in large quantities to be used. Two or three members of the Tariff Commission were directors of works which were now using this process. They were, at any rate, intelligent enough for that. Upon the general question he wished to refer to the opinion expressed by Sir Wilfred Laurier who had said—

> "If we want to maintain the British Empire, for my own part my firm conviction is that it can be maintained upon one condition only, and that is that every component part of the Empire should be left to do the best it can for itself."

In the course of the debate upon Mr. Villiers' Motion to which he had referred Mr. Gladstone said—

> "It is not demonstration we have in view by figures or reasonings; it is to bring the question to a practical issue, to reflect the sentiments of the country, and be able to speak of the doctrine of protection as a thing past and gone."

These discussions and agitations were interfering with the ordinary course of trade and caused a restriction upon employment. He therefore moved this Resolution in order that the verdict of the Nation might to-day be recorded upon the question.

*MR. AUSTIN TAYLOR (Liverpool, East Toxteth) said he rose to second this Resolution which, from its nature, must necessarily be controversial. Perhaps, however, he would be allowed to associate himself with the expressions of satisfaction which had fallen from the mover of the Resolution at the restoration of the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition to his accustomed place in the deliberations of this House. The first half of the Resolution was a declaration that they had in the main a House of Commons which had been returned pledged to the principles of free trade. It was possible that other issues might have entered into the election through which they had just passed, but he was quite willing to accept the statement of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham that the Fiscal question was really the only question which the electorate were deeply exercised upon at the last election. Therefore, he could not imagine that the electors went to the ballot deeply exercised upon one question and forgot to register their conviction when they elected the present House of Commons. He had no sympathy with that frame of mind at all. Those who had made the appeal to Cæsar accepted, he presumed, the responsibility of the verdict which had been given. If one pulled the string of a shower-bath expecting a gentle spray and got a deluge, one was apt to be told, if he shivered, that he ought not to have pulled the string. He thought for another reason that it was better that the House of Commons should proceed to register its verdict upon the main principle upon which it had been returned. They were told on excellent authority just before the general election that this House would be merely an interim House, that it would shortly disappear and give place, he supposed, to something more truly representative of British democratic art. It was perfectly true that every Parliament and every Member of every Parliament was in a certain sense an interlude. They were all interludes. He could apply that in the most exalted quarters in this House, but he refrained. If this House was indeed to be an interlude, surely it was all the more reason why they should seize the opportunity of securing a deliberate statement of its opinions on free trade before the opportunity disappeared from this transient and fleeting phantom. There was another reason, and that was that for the first time they were confronted with an Opposition which on the question of Tariff Reform was, with regard to leaders, a united Opposition. That was a good thing in every sense—good for the Party which they led, and good for the State. He hoped their union was perfect—as perfect as that of the famous double star Algol whose dual nature was only detected by the fact that one member of the system periodically eclipsed the other. In the second part of the Resolution they were asked to register their emphatic resistance to a duty on corn. He thought that was the main issue, or certainly one of the main issues, between Gentlemen on the opposite sides of the House. He and his friends objected in principle to a duty on corn for the purpose of preference. Hon. Members on the other side did not object to it as a matter of principle, and he understood that they were now prepared to adopt it, assuming, of course, that no better means could be found. He desired to call the attention of the House to the wheat movement of the last six years. He had not selected that period because of any capricious desire to use it for controversial purposes. The figures he was about to quote, though correct, he ventured to use merely as illustrations. He selected these six years because they bore testimony to the most extraordinary revolution in the supply of wheat to this country that it had ever known since it became dependent on other countries for its supply. There were six countries which stood out as the principal suppliers of wheat to this country. He believed there were about seventeen countries in all from which we drew our supplies, but it was to six which were specially prominent that he was specially justified in calling attention, namely, Russia, the United States, the Argentine, British India, Australia, and Canada. He would give the House in round figures the highest and lowest imports for these six years, and he would also say something about the prices. Russia in 1901 sent us 2,500,000 cwts. of wheat, and in 1905, 24,700,000 cwts. The United States used to be spoken of as the granary of this country, but that was an expression which must certainly be modified in view of the figures he was about to quote. In 1902 the United States sent us 43,300,000 cwts. of wheat, and in 1905 the amount shrank to 6,600,000 cwts. The Argentine, which in 1902 sent us 4,300,000 cwts., sent in 1905 no less than 23,230,000 cwts. British India, which in 1900 sent us the paltry quantity of only 6,000 cwts., sent in 1904, no less than 25,500,000 cwts. Australia, which in 1903 sent us 26 cwts. in 1904 sent 10,273,000 cwts. Canada, the steadiest of all the suppliers of wheat and the least sensational of them all, in 1903 sent us 10,800,000 cwts., the highest on record, and last year the quantity shrank to 6,200,000 cwts. He mentioned these interesting figures for the purpose of proving the vicissitudes of supply and the revolution in the sources of origin which this country had experienced during the last six years. He would now say a word about the prices of imported wheat, although the prices of English wheat bore out the argument equally well. During these six years the mean price per quarter was 29s. 4½d. and the extent to which it varied was small and insignificant, notwithstanding the gigantic revolution in the sources of supply to which he had called attention. In 1900 the mean price was 29s. 1¾d., a variation from the mean of the six years of 2¾d.; in 1901, 28s. 4½d., a variation of 1s.; in 1902, 28s. 8d., a variation of 8½d.; in 1903, 29s. 1¼d., a variation of 3¼d.; in 1904, 30s. 1½d., a variation of 8d.; and in 1905, 30s. 11¾d., a variation of 1s. 7¼d.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR (City of London): Will the hon. Gentleman state what the prices were in the years when the shilling duty was put on, and taken off.

*MR. AUSTIN TAYLOR said he did not think that affected the argument. His argument was that although in the different countries of the origin of supply there were variations, the price in this country remained singularly steady. He took it that the proposition which the tariff reformers had before them was not to put a duty on wheat from everywhere, but to put a duty on wheat in such a sense as to boycott certain sources of supply and encourage others. In other words their policy, if it meant anything, was that out of these six countries Russia, the Argentine, and the United States were for some reason not to be allowed to supply us with wheat. [Cries of "Oh!"] If they wished a self-contained Empire that was of course what it meant. Our supplies were to be confined to the countries that fly the British flag. That was the policy which was challenged by this Resolution and which it was the emphatic duty of this House to challenge. He submitted that the figures which he had quoted showed that under the present system, by which everybody was allowed to manage his own business in the matter of wheat supply, did make for the most perfect security and stability in the prime article of bread for the crowded industrial population of this country. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham had commended his policy to the country on a three-fold line of argument. He had commended it on the ground of security. What position more secure could be imagined than that by which they gave to neutral countries an interest in disposing to us of the surplus of their bounteous harvests? Was that the kind of illegitimate competition against which they desired to protect the country? From the point of view of the security and stability of the Empire nothing ought to be allowed which would interfere for a moment with that perfect mechanism which the figures he had given so beautifully illustrated. In regard to the ground of mutual bargain between ourselves and the Colonies, he might refer to a speech by Mr. Fisher, Minister of Agriculture in Canada. Mr. Fisher had most honestly pointed out the difference between what Canada had to offer on the one hand and what we had to give on the other, and how utterly impossible it was to compare the knocking off of a few bricks from the top of a tariff wall already constructed with the entire change in our fiscal system, and, if they liked to call it so, our rooted prejudice, which was proposed when it was suggested that we should as a policy put these duties on wheat. The last ground adopted by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham was the appeal to the sentiment of Imperial unity—one to which he himself wherever he stood in this House would always respond. From that point of view the words already quoted by the mover of the Resolution were in a certain sense a sufficient answer He did not believe that the cause of Imperial unity would be imperilled if the House registered their verdict to-day that it was not in the interest of the people of this country to interfere with the food supply by artificial means. He looked to the words of Sir Wilfred Laurier who, when asked what would be the effect on his policy of the results of the recent election in Great Britain, remarked—

> "I have only to say that the issue of the election in Great Britain is to the British people alone. Whatever Party is in office, we are friends of that Party. Whatever Party is in Opposition, we are friends of that Party. We want to be on good terms with the whole people of Great Britain."

Thus, though he believed that disastrous results had followed the propositions of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham in some directions, there was, at any rate, this consolation, that in the great self-governing Colonies of the Empire he did not believe any bad results would follow. They would remain attached to the Empire and to the old country by ligaments which were more enduring than the bonds of material interest. They must recognise in this House—this democratic House of Parliament—he supposed the first House of Commons which had ever contained the pure milk of democracy—constituent elements more akin to the Parliaments of the great self-governing Colonies than any of its predecessors. And he ventured to hope that it might be possible—he believed it would be possible—although they were bound to reject a proposition which would interfere with the food supplies of this country, to maintain the great cause of unity between the component parts of the Empire, and to travel in harmony, in good fellowship, with all who were bound together as nations in the bundle of life under the British flag —not as it was once called a mere commercial asset, but as a symbol of the living ideas which had permeated this Empire from the centre to the periphery.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House, recognising that in the recent General Election the people of the United Kingdom have demonstrated their unqualified fidelity to the principles and practice of Free Trade, deems it right to record its determination to resist any proposal, whether by way of taxation upon foreign corn, or of the creation of a general tariff upon foreign goods, to create in this country a system of protection."—(*Sir James Kitson.*)

MR. A. J. BALFOUR (City of London): I think everybody will admit that the two hon. gentlemen who have just moved and seconded the Resolution which you, Mr. Speaker, have read from the Chair, have performed their task with great moderation, and that nothing has escaped them which could give just cause of offence to any Party on either side of the House, whatever their opinions may be. I have one fundamental comment to make on those two speeches, but, before I come to it, I may perhaps say incidentally that I was rather surprised at the mover of the Resolution giving us, as one of the chief arguments which had influenced him and which ought to influence the House, the history of what took place in Yorkshire in the year 1852. The hon. Gentleman gave us an account of how, on the advent of Lord Derby to power, there spread throughout the country a great feeling of uneasiness lest there was to be a reversal of the policy inaugurated by Sir Robert Peel in 1846. Mr. Cobden was greatly agitated and proceeded to stump the country, and, with that remarkable ability which he always showed when he was dealing with these matters, to do his best to prevent any return to the pre-1846 system. But, said the mover of the Motion, after all, these fears were unnecessary. Mr. Disraeli soon after made a declaration that Free Trade in corn would be maintained. That was acquiesced in by everybody concerned on both sides of politics, and since then, during the past forty or fifty years, he said, this question has been at rest. The system which was thus warmly assented to by Mr. Cobden, by Mr. Gladstone, by the Peelites, by the Whig Party and by the Radical Party, left a shilling duty on corn. I understand, therefore, from the hon. Gentleman that in his view a shilling duty on corn was no interference with Free Trade, and that if there were an adequate reason for such a duty, financial or otherwise, whatever criticism he might make on that policy he would feel himself debarred from saying that it would interfere with the principles of Free Trade in food as understood by Mr. Cobden. The other observation the hon. Gentleman made which rather surprised me was that these discussions upon the fiscal system of the country, all this calling in question the established practice, do infinite harm to trade; they disturb people's minds; they upset commerce, and they interfere with enterprise. Yes, but that observation came at an unfortunate moment. It came at the end of half an hour's explanation that never has trade of this country been so prosperous.

* SIR JAMES KITSON: I referred to our external trade. [OPPOSITION cries of "Oh, oh."]

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: That is a subtle distinction which I cannot follow. I understand that the meaning of the hon. Gentleman is that a discussion on fiscal policy stimulates and aids external trade, but is a disadvantage to internal trade. I do not know upon what theoretical or practical basis he founds that strange conclusion, but at all events we may congratulate ourselves with him that the state of trade in the country is such as to make him at all events certain that no change in our fiscal system should be adopted. But is he going to be shaken in that view if prosperity decreases and trade diminishes? Is his faith only a faith for fine weather? I remember it was only about five or six years ago that the present Prime Minister told us we were being outstripped by all our rivals. I do not know whether that fact, if it was a fact, would have any effect upon the fiscal views of the hon. Gentleman, but if it would not, if his views upon what he described as free trade and what he described as protection are quite unaltered by these familiar oscillations of prosperity and adversity, why did he give us this long explanation, very interesting in itself, of the present prosperity of the country? It would have been wholly irrelevant and would have had no connection whatever with the question now before the House. I think that is the true view, and personally I do not base my view upon fiscal questions either upon the momentary prosperity or the momentary adversity of the trade of country. The hon. Gentleman takes a different view. Then why does he talk about this matter? Why then did he explain that the country was never more prosperous?

MR. THEODORE TAYLOR (Lancashire, Radcliffe): It was to confute the arguments of the right hon. Member for West Birmingham.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: It could only be that it had some relevance to the Motion which Mr. Speaker was to put from the Chair. Before I come to my main criticism of the two speeches, may I thank both hon. Gentlemen for the courteous terms in which they have referred to my return to these familiar scenes? The hon. Member for the East Toxteth Division of Liverpool gave us an interesting account of the sources of food supply which have reached this country during the last five years and the price of corn during those years. I interrupted — I hope not discourteously — and ventured to ask him if he could tell us the date at which the shilling duty on corn was put on and taken off during the period he took under review. I have not had time to compare the prices, but I think you will find that unaccountably the price falls when the duty is put on and rises when it is taken off. I think he will find that the effect of that shilling duty on corn was masked by much greater and more powerful causes, which no doubt do affect the prices of wheat in this country. If the small duty on corn which was universal in its operation was completely masked by other causes at work during the same period, surely a small duty on corn which is not universal would be still more effectively masked by these same causes. I would call attention now to a common peculiarity of both speeches of the hon. Gentlemen. It was that they were really not directed towards the support of the Motion now before the House; they were an attack upon the views held or supposed to be held by my right hon. friend and myself as well as by our friends on this side of the House. In other words the Motion before us is, as I have already suggested, a vote of censure upon the Opposition. This is a novel Parliamentary operation, but it is an operation with which the Government have deliberately associated themselves. The Resolution was moved, as was often the case, by an unofficial Member, but when a Government gives time to unofficial Members to move Motions of this sort, it is well understood by all familiar with Parliamentary work that it is in effect a Government proposal and that the Government are responsible for it. They are responsible for the use of the time of the House, they are responsible for the wording of the Resolution itself, and they are responsible for the object with which it is brought forward. Now I venture to say, having had some little experience in these questions, that no Government can do a more foolish thing in this world than raise unnecessary controversy. It will be their misfortune, as it has been the misfortune of every Government who preceded them, and as it will be that of every Government who are going to succeed them—if our powers of vision can look forward to so distant a period—it is the misfortune of every Government in this country that in carrying on the business, legislative or administrative, of the country it has to raise or is obliged to raise questions which carry with them the bitterest controversy. But I never yet heard of a Government which knew its business which raised an unnecessary debate, and gave up its own time, which should be devoted to its own business, to picking a quarrel with the Opposition. It is of course the business of the Opposition to pick quarrels with the Government, and I hope we shall not fall far behind our predecessors in carrying out that recognised duty. But that the Government should come to our assistance, that they should help us in our task, that they should make difficulties for themselves in the vain hope of embarrassing us, does appear to me to be the most extraordinary policy which I have ever seen in all my experience of Parliamentary life. If they like it, I do not know why they should not continue it. I could suggest other Motions on similar lines. I do not see why the Government should not give time for the discussion of a Resolution that the people of the United Kingdom, having shown their unqualified fidelity to the principles and practice of religious liberty, are therefore solemnly determined that the education of every child should be that which the local authority desires. We might also have another Resolution saying that the people of this country, having shown their unqualified fidelity to the hatred of slavery, the Government had therefore determined to leave it to somebody else to decide whether slavery should be continued. I can promise the Government that if they will bring on these Motions — I have only given a rough sketch of them—they will have as interesting debates as I think I can promise them they will have on the present occasion. Now, my criticism on the two interesting and excellent speeches which have just been delivered is that both the mover and the seconder of the Resolution absolutely forgot what it was they were doing, or trying to do. They were absolutely trying to pledge the majority of the House of Commons to a policy which is to last through the time of the present Parliament. They supposed themselves to be speaking in favour of a vote of censure on my right hon. friend and myself; but if anybody will look at the Resolution they will see that it has nothing whatever to do with particular individuals or parties in this House. What it does is to require the House of Commons to pledge itself for six years to a particular policy. If that be admitted, and I do not think it can be denied, there is not a man on either side of the House who will not agree with me that the terms in which that solemn league and covenant is going to be embodied should be absolutely clear. There should be no mistake about the terms of the pledge which the House of Commons is making and which should define the action of the Government, who agree with the Resolution, and of the majority who vote for it, and make it absolutely beyond dispute what it is they are pledging themselves and the country to do or to abstain from doing during the term of this Parliament I daresay the term of this Parliament will approach the legal term of Parliaments, and, at all events, without serious chance of error I may put it at six years. Therefore, this is a pledge which the House of Commons is exacting from the majority of its Members as to what they may or may not do on certain very important matters for six years to come. I think that that is an act of very great importance, involving very wide issues, and calling upon us to examine with the greatest care the terms on which this pledge is to be exacted. I will ask one or two questions of the Government as to the meaning which they attach to the pledge which they are exacting from the majority of Members. In the first place, I should like to ask whether it is by deliberate intention that the words, "or otherwise," have been omitted after the word "goods" in the last line of the Resolution. If hon. Gentlemen will take the Resolution in their hands and read it, they will see that, as it stands on the Paper, in its preamble it alleges that—

> "The people of the United Kingdom have demonstrated their unqualified fidelity to the principles and practice of free trade."

They will then see, if they look at the operative part of the Resolution, that there are only two ways in which the framers of the Resolution debar the principles and practice of free trade, as they understand the words, from being violated. Is that intentional? Do they deliberately desire to affirm that? Is it their deliberate intention to allow free trade to be violated in other ways except by imposing a duty on corn or on foreign goods? [MINISTERIAL cries of "No."] I accept with pleasure that irresponsible denial on some of the back benches, but this is a question which should be answered across the Table. [MINISTERIAL cries of "No, no."] At all events, one thing is plain, and that is that the Government do not know; and I must say, for I know how mistakes may occur in drafting, that considering that this Resolution has been put down by two gentlemen of great ability, that it has been the subject of arrangement with the Government, who have made themselves responsible for the terms of the Resolution and have very likely helped to draw it, it is very extraordinary that they do not know now whether the repudiation of protection during this Parliament is a repudiation which only applies to two methods o carrying protection into effect or whether it does not.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Is the right hon. Gentleman serious?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I did not believe that could be the intention, but when I saw that a gloomy silence pervaded that bench at my examination of the Resolution, I began to have some suspicion; but I am perfectly content. I am sure it was never intended, and therefore I may take it for granted, that the Government will themselves put down an Amendment to put the Resolution right. But there can be absolutely no doubt as to what the grammatical meaning is. It does shut out only two methods of carrying on what they call protection while it leaves open all the others. Is it worth while for this House to go through a debate on this Resolution as if you intended to prevent any form of protection at all? I hope the Government will make the Resolution conform to their own intentions. This, I take it, is merely a blunder. I have had to do with the drawing of too many Resolutions myself to be too severe upon such a blunder; but I think this is rather a curious one, and it is strange that it should have escaped so many vigilant eyes. I come now to what is intended by the Government when they ask the House to place the Resolution as an effective Motion upon our journals. If I understand the Resolution rightly, they regard the existence of a single import duty unbalanced by an equal Excise duty as constituting a system of protection. If they do not mean that they will again have to amend the Resolution, because they distinctly say that any tax on foreign corn does in itself constitute a system of protection. Therefore, any import tax unbalanced by an equal Excise tax is a system of protection. It is perfectly well known that we have at this moment in existence two import taxes which are not actually balanced by any system of Excise duty, the tobacco duty and the cocoa duty. I greatly regret that the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer, owing to an accident, is prevented from being here this afternoon, but, were he here, he would be the last to deny that the actual operation of the tobacco duty and the cocoa duty is to give a protective benefit to the manufacturers of finished cocoa and finished tobacco. Now, I should like to know whether the Government intend to modify that system or not? I should strongly advise them not to modify it; for it might involve them in an embarrassing controversy, but evidently, if they mean to retain those two protective duties, they must make the formal exception in this Resolution. You cannot bind the House of Commons, as you propose to bind it, not to introduce a protective system when you hold, firstly, that a single unbalanced duty constitutes a protective system, and secondly, as you must hold, that we have at this moment two import duties which have a decidedly protective effect; and, therefore, I hope the Government will inform me at once, after I have finished, whether they intend to modify the protective duties now in existence, and, if they do not, whether they will put down the requisite Amendment to the Resolution, so as to make the Resolution conform with the policy which they and their followers intend to carry out. The third point I have to ask is this, and it is of more importance than the one I have referred to. Of course, the word protection here is used in the technical sense in which the word is employed in economic discussion. It does not mean the protection which is provided by your fleets, armies, administration, and so forth. Very well. Now, if you use the word in the technical sense, there is no man acquainted with the writings of political economists who will contradict me when I say that any legislation the effect of which is to diminish the importation into this country of foreign labour is protective in the economic sense. If that be so, if you pass this Resolution as it stands you will be precluded for six years, whatever contingency may arise, from touching that question. [MINISTERIAL cries of "No."] My hon. friend the Member for Stepney had an Amendment on the Paper to prevent foreign labour being introduced into this country at the crisis of a strike. By this Resolution as it stands you cannot attempt to deal with a thing of that kind during the lifetime of this Parliament. One of the amiable fictions which obtained wide currency in some of the constituencies during the election was that Chinese labour was going to be introduced in order to displace either the agricultural labourer or the miner or both.

[MINISTERIAL cries of "Where" and "Name."] I do not myself see any signs of a great Chinese immigration, but there is no law against it, and there is no doubt the Chinese have in large numbers invaded great industrial countries and displaced a great amount of local labour. Suppose that were to take place here, I for one should certainly not dismiss the idea of dealing with the problem by legislation. Then why dismiss the idea for six years by your Resolution? There is no economist in this House who will say that the intrepretation I have put on economic language is extravagant; and if that be so, then you ought to make your terms clear. Before you enter into this controversy you must make it obvious what you mean and what you do not mean. [AN HON. MEMBER: On a half sheet of note-paper.] Again it is laid down in the Resolution that a general tariff, howsoever constituted, whatever be the object of its framers, or the method on which it is framed, by itself constitutes an invasion of free trade and a system of protection. Well, India has a general tariff. I presume, therefore, in the opinion of every gentleman who votes for this Resolution, India has a protective system. Now the financial policy of India is absolutely under the control of this House; and therefore those who think that a tariff, however framed, is necessarily protective, who admit, as they must, that India has it, and that we can regulate in this House the tariff of India, must recognise that they think one system good for India and another system good for this country. They think that protection, as they define it, is good for India and bad for this country.

SIR HENRY FOWLER (Wolverhampton, E.): Is there not an Excise duty on cotton?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Mr. JOHN MORLEY, Montrose Burghs): India has no general tariff.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I cannot imagine this House destroying the financial system of India; but, consider, every man who is going to vote for this Resolution believes in his version of free trade, not as being good relative to Great Britain alone, but as being good for all times and all places. Free trade is held by these Gentlemen—it certainly was by Mr. Cobden—as an absolute doctrine, as the proper system on which to carry on the fiscal system of every country. If that be their view, they ought to say clearly whether they mean to interfere with India or with any other of our dependencies within our administrative control, or whether they do not mean to apply to those dependencies the same system which on universal grounds they think desirable for this country. The right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for India interrupted me just now very courteously, and said India has not a general tariff. The term "general tariff," no doubt, like the word "protection," is ambiguous; but before asking the House to enter into this solemn league and covenant they will perhaps make it clear what they do mean by a general tariff. It is one thing to use the word in platform discussion, in private conversation, or in debate; it is another thing to put it down in a Resolution and bind the House of Commons while the House of Commons is still in being. The general tariff as used in Germany means a tariff which is general because it is applied to all countries in which an exception has not been made. The right hon. Gentleman will at all events admit that there are in India Customs imposed upon imports with no corresponding Excise excepting only, so far as I know, the case of cotton.

SIR HENRY FOWLER: And sugar.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The sugar case is a different case. I will accept sugar for the sake of argument, but the right hon. Gentleman will not deny that there are duties in India in which there has been no attempt made to put on an Excise. India, therefore, is a protective country, as defined. I must say that it is a most anomalous thing for the House, without explanation, to lay down this hard-and-fast doctrine for itself as to what is eternally right in the matter of taxation, when a country which it has in the hollow of its hand is permitted by it, and I presume is going to be permitted by it, to violate all the canons of free trade and to adopt what is described here as a system of protection. There is another point which I think every one must admit is of extreme importance. You are going by this Resolution for six years to prevent the Chancellor of the Exchequer of the day putting on any duty of any sort or kind, or for any purpose whatever, which has not a precisely corresponding Excise. Has the House considered what a self-denying ordinance of that sort may mean? Have they considered how difficult it is to increase revenue on the present basis of taxation? Have they considered the claims which may be made—some of which will be made—upon the taxation of this country for carrying out social reforms? Have they considered the necessities which may be thrown on this country by the accidents of foreign complications? I notice that while the Government talk, no doubt very sincerely, but glibly, about protection, they are pledged to the feeding of school children, to old-age pensions, to payment of Members, to payment of election expenses; and they are considering also the desirability of increasing the remuneration of the great Civil Service of the country. They are hardly likely to get through the education debates without some further calls on the public funds. They have got to deal with the difficulties of local taxation, which in some places, at all events, are of the most tremendous description. In addition to all that, they are pledged to an addition to the Sinking Fund in order to make further provision for Debt. All these are certain calls upon the finances of the country. How about uncertain calls? Is there any man who thinks that his powers of prophecy are such that he can look forward to six years and be confident that within that period no cloud shall arise upon our political horizon, no danger menace us from abroad, no necessity be thrown upon us for increasing military preparations—that there is no probability of war arising and all that war means? That the Government are earnestly desirous of peace I know. No Government ever have existed in this country, or ever could exist, which were not, for their own sake if not for the country's, earnestly desirous of peace. But can we always command that which we earnestly desire? Is it in the power of any Cabinet Minister, however circumspect, or any Cabinet, however cautious, to say, now at the beginning of March, 1906, "We look forward with absolute assurance and clear-sighted vision to the next six years, and we promise that nothing shall arise from external causes which need occasion any heavy expenditure or any anxiety to the Chancellor of the Exchequer?" The Government which would pledge itself to such a prophecy would be a Government of charlatans; but this Government is not a Government of charlatans, and it very well knows that no such prophecy can be made. Any man who would make it would write himself down a fool or a knave. If that be so, have you got clearly before you how you are going to find the necessary money without putting on a Customs duty which shall not have an exactly corresponding Excise? It will tax the ingenuity of the present Chancellor of the Exchequer and all his colleagues to find any method of raising large sums of money without widening the basis of taxation, and they will find it uncommonly difficult to widen the basis of taxation in order to meet great and growing needs without violating the principles they have laid down in this Resolution. If the Chancellor of the Exchequer seriously thinks that, by manipulating the death duties, by taxing ground values, or by any other expedient of that sort, he is going to meet the kind of need of which I am speaking, I can assure him he has not given adequate attention to what may be a most pressing subject and a most anxious matter of debate within these walls. Unless the Government are —I was going to say insane, but that would sound disrespectful—but unless they are so intent upon carrying their vote of censure against the Opposition as absolutely to forget the responsibility which has been put upon them, they will surely add somer ider to this Resolution which will say that in time of great national emergency, or for some great national object, this so-called economical principle which they proclaim in the Resolution may be violated. But I see no sign of that. That is the substance of what I have got to say at the present stage of the debate. The question of what is the fiscal policy which I recommend is interesting and no doubt important; it can, however, hardly become a matter of practical constructive policy for a few years; and there are other questions even more pressing raised in the Amendment of my right hon. friend, upon the discussion of which I shall be delighted to give a full account of my views on the question. But that is not the Resolution before the House. The Resolution pledges the House to a particular course of action for six years, and we cannot rationally discuss that course of action unless the Government tell us exactly what the terms in which the Resolution is couched exactly mean. I will therefore repeat my questions for their satisfaction. As to the first. With regard to the omission of the words "or otherwise" after the word "goods" in the Resolution, I understand the Government are going to put that right. My second question is—Are they going to abolish the existing protective duties in this country, and, if not, are they going to put in any Amendment excepting them by name and explicitly? Otherwise, it is perfectly clear that the whole Resolution becomes nonsense, because the country has at this moment what they would call a system of protection in full force; and how absurd their position will be when they are asked on the Budget whether they adhere to the terms of their Resolution. The third question is—Whether they are prepared to move, or to assent to others moving, words which will make it clear that, in refusing to deal with protection, we do not refuse to deal with the protection of labour. The fourth question is—Do they propose to take any steps to abolish the protection which they say now exists in India; and, if not, whether they ought not to make a special exemption of India and other dependencies over which we have control, so as to make it clear that this House is conscious in laying down these principles that they are insular and solely for internal application. The fifth question is—Will they consent to put words into this Resolution which shall make it possible for the House, without stulifying itself, in times of great national emergency, or for the purpose of carrying out some great social reform, to broaden the basis of taxation, even though it be found practically impossible to carry out that broadening process without putting on Custom duties that shall not be exactly and nicely balanced by Excise?

These are five questions of great importance, the purport of which I have made as clear as I can, to which I hope the Government will give an immediate answer, since they must themselves feel that so long as so many ambiguities lurk in the terms of their Resolution it is quite impossible for this House to conduct a debate upon it with any prospect of arriving at a clear and satisfactory conclusion.

*MR. RUSSELL REA (Gloucester) said that the right hon. Gentleman ——

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Is no member of the Government going to reply?

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN rose and remained standing amid loud cries of "Name, name" and "Order, order" from the MINISTERIAL Benches.

*MR. SPEAKER: I have called upon the hon. Member for Gloucester. [OPPOSITION cries of "Bannerman, Bannerman."]

*MR. RUSSELL REA said that this Resolution affirmed the fidelity of the people of this country to the principles and practice of free trade. Its practice was directly attacked by the proposals of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham; its fundamental principles were no less directly attacked by the economic teaching of the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition. These two champions of protection quite understood and adopted the economic principle of the division of labour. One of them had a policy—a very clear and definite policy—but he had no theory of international exchange and finance, and it was impossible to reconcile his various speeches and arguments with any consistent theory of international exchange of products—free trade or protectionist, nationalistic or cosmopolitan. The other champion had a theory, a consistent, a logical, but, he believed, erroneous, theory of British or insular trade, but then he had no policy. He had lately—apparently unwillingly—been induced to admit that his theory might include and even lead to the policy of the other, but he still seemed to hope it would not do so. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham, when he did condescend to touch upon any of the principles that did, and must, govern international trade, said—

> "Surely it is a mathematical truth that if imports come into this country of manufactured goods which we can make as well as any other nation, they must displace labour."

And he went on to calculate from time to time how many thousands of British workmen were deprived of their living by this or that particular import. It was the utterance of this ancient and thousand times refuted fallacy that induced Professor Marshall to sign the celebrated manifesto of the sixteen professors of economic science against the right hon. Gentleman's policy. At Newcastle the right hon. Gentleman actually argued that the total stoppage of not only all our export trade, but of all production of every description at home, would result in an immediate increase of our imports to the prodigious sum of £1,918,000,000. When faced with the definite question in an abstract form, whether we pay for our imports by the produce of British labour, he would grudgingly admit it, and nine-tenths of his arguments were implicit denials of this axiomatic truth. On the other hand, the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition had, he admitted, a scientific theory of international trade. He was no vulgar hater of imports; he was only concerned with his speculations as to how they could continue to maintain the imports in the future, and continue to pay for them with the labour. But then he had no policy; the nearest thing they had got to a policy were declarations such as the following—

> "He is opposed to confining our import duties to duties for revenue only."

At the same time—

> "he is also opposed to imposing duties for the purpose of protecting the home producer."
>
> "He is not opposed in principle to a tax on corn,"

but he accepted the probability that—

> "the country will not tolerate a tax on food."

He was opposed to a general tariff—on 13th February, 1906, he refused to accept its necessity, but the next day, on the 14th, he accepted it in principle, if the necessity, in which he did not believe, should arise. These four general propositions constituted his policy, his whole policy, as far as it was disclosed. As an economist he understood and respected the right hon Gentleman, although he believed that his conclusions respecting British trade were curiously wrong; but as a politician and tariff reformer he had yet to begin to discover his policy. But both these Gentlemen agreed in one thing. They were both free traders; the real thing, the ultimate, but distant free trade was their ideal. If they were free traders, then so was Friederich List, the great prophet of protection—the protectionists' Adam Smith. No one had given so glowing a picture of the ultimate millenium of free trade, of the wealth and prosperity, "passing the power of the most vivid imagination to conceive," as List himself. But meanwhile they were protectionists. They belonged to the school of those who "sin that grace may abound." Both these Gentlemen agreed also in this—they regarded this country as on the highway to industrial decline, to an absolute decline, and far advanced on the road of a relative decline compared with her rivals and competitors in trade. They both based their argument on the fact that other nations, particularly Germany and America, had increased not only their total national product of manufactured articles, but their exports of manufactured goods, at a greater rate and even in greater actual amount than we had done. If this was true, and if it was the result of our fiscal policy, then our policy stood condemned. Well, as a fact, it was true, the phenomenon was undeniable. They must examine and understand this phenomenon, for it lay at the basis of all the protectionist arguments. Had the increase of the manufactures of America and Germany been the consequence of their fiscal policy, and had it been at our expense? These were the questions they must answer, and the answer was not difficult. The particular direction of these American and German manufactures might have been the consequence of their fiscal policy, the amount of that development had not. It was inevitable under any fiscal system, protectionist or free trade; and it had not been at our expense on the whole; if one of our industries had suffered another had profited. In the modern industrial age the world's consumption of manufactured articles had increased ten-fold. Sixty years ago England was the workshop of the world, but the dogma that it was to be always the sole workshop of the world—that they could monopolise the infinitely expanded trade of the world—was a palpable absurdity. They could not keep the whole, but he maintained that they were keeping the first call on the trade of the world, they were keeping the best of the trade, and they were keeping as much as they could do in good times. Anything beyond this—it was "a mathematical truth," as the right hon. Gentleman would say—must overflow to other nations. Germany had of late been passing through a stage of social and economic development which we passed through a generation earlier. She had been drafting into her cities a large half-employed, under-fed, underpaid, agricultural population to found her new manufacturing industries. This country no longer had this resource, it was dried up; our agricultural districts were to-day under-peopled, and the land was crying out for labour. In this migration of population from country to town, we were at least a generation ahead of Germany, and she had just passed through what must necessarily be the most rapid period in her manufacturing growth. That was the explanation, and the sufficient explanation, of the more rapid growth of German manufactures than of our own. But had not this growth been at our expense? It had not. We had kept, not the whole, but the best, and we had kept as much as we could do in good times. Our existing industries were sufficient to absorb all available and willing workers in good times. Take the year 1899, a year of booming trade, and a year of peace—at that time our prosperity reached saturation point, we had as much as we could hold. Every mill, factory, mine, and ship, and every man in this country, was fully employed, every employer was looking out for hands, every man had the choice of two jobs. Orders of all kinds were refused by our manufacturers; he knew by his own experience, both in his own business, and as a railway director, that orders overflowed to the foreigners because we could not take them. And yet this was a period in which notably German and American exports expanded more than our own, and the tariff reformers told them that this increase was at our expense. If this was so, they were bound to tell how we could have taken it on, what we could have done more than we did, or what we could have done better than we did. The problem of the unemployment of the willing and the fit was simply a question of mitigating and tiding over bad times; that and that only. It followed from this, that to import a trade by tariffs and taxes was not a measure that would absorb the unemployed. That was to import unemployment as well as employment. This the Americans found when, at an enormous cost to other unprotected industries, they violently imported a tin plate manufacture. That he might read a full report of the speech of the right hon. Member for West Birmingham in South Wales, in which he gave this as a striking example of pure profit to America and pure loss to us, he bought a Cardiff newspaper, and in the very same issue that recorded his speech, he read these words in their market report—

> "The condition of the American tin plate industry is most unsatisfactory, one half the mills being closed down, and the American Tinplate Company has reduced its quotation for plates by 20 cents on the 100 lb. box. Little business is said to be coming in from canners. Independent sheet mill owners have secured a reduction of 20 per cent. in wages."

No such state of affairs at that time or since had existed in South Wales. America had imported this unemployment, and her unemployment was always greatest in her protected industries. It was obvious that the problem of the unemployed must be attacked by other methods than tariffs. It might be said that he was an optimist. He confessed that the more study he gave to this question, the more optimistic he became. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham called himself an optimist; if he was, all he could say was that so were Jonah and Jeremiah. Let them very shortly examine the arguments against the optimistic view of the British commercial position of both the right hon. Gentlemen, of the one who did not call himself an optimist, of the Jonah, who was cast out into the deep, but after little more than three days had come back to the surface, and of Jeremiah. The arguments of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham were entirely statistical. They had been dealt with over and over again with particular ability and effect by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, but during the two years and a half of this controversy he had been met by an even more formidable antagonist; he had been confuted most successfully by the mysterious providence whose dealings were revealed monthly by the Board of Trade. If the right hon. Gentleman said our foreign trade was failing us, and the loss was only hidden from our eyes by the increase of our colonial trade, immediately the foreign exports leaped forward and restored precisely the old relative proportion between the two. If he said it was our export of manufactures that was less and the loss was hidden from our eyes by the increased shipments of coal at high prices, immediately coal exports shrunk in value, and manufactures jumped forward, and doubly made up the difference. If he said our old staple exports were declining and we were being reduced to secondary products, "pickles and jam," then, as by magic, these same "staple" exports, cotton, wool, iron and machinery bounded in advance. He had proved to be a Balaam, but a Balaam with a difference from his prototype, the old Balaam came to curse, but was constrained by a higher power to bless; the new Balaam got through his curses all right, but his curses seemed to be the very spells that immediately brought down the blessings. He always was rather sorry for Balaam. The arguments of the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition were not statistical; they were pure deductive reasoning. He admitted freely that the right hon. Gentleman was a well-instructed, theoretical deductive economist. He admitted his theory, that its application to England was intelligible, that it was consistent with itself, and that the right hon. Gentleman had always consistently held it. He was possessed by a theory that oppressed him like a nightmare—it was a nightmare. It started thus, "The world except ourselves has, rightly or wrongly, insisted that industry shall run upon national, and not upon cosmopolitan lines." Therefore what could be more clear than the deduction that our industries must inevitably be gradually contracted into a like national area, whether we would or not. The whole course of the inevitable decay of British trade could be logically deduced from one or two epigrams—at least from neatly and epigramatically expressed general propositions. For example, that by foreign tariffs trade was forced to flow along channels "engineered," not by nature, but by law "and diplomacy," was undeniable. From this he deduced the conclusion that we were forced by foreign tariffs to change our industries from the channels into which they had been "engineered" into others; and then this further deduction. These changes were "to trades" presumably less remunerative "than the old," that was to say from the higher to the lower. So far the right hon. Gentleman had proved the degradation of British trade by abstract reasoning. Another of his general statements was that "our large imports are a vital necessity to us, and the exports required to pay for them are not necessities to foreign nations." This also was undeniable. His deductions were, firstly, that we were therefore at a disadvantage in the business; secondly, that we must therefore purchase our imports by continually lowering our prices; thirdly, that our imports must "therefore" become "first costly, then unattainable." He had now proved by pure deductive logic not only the degradation but the annihilation of our foreign trade. When the right hon. Gentleman addressed the British Association he asked them this question, alluding to another subject—

> "Do we not here touch a series of problems with which that most unsatisfactory branch of philosophy, inductive logic, ought to deal?"

He would ask the right hon. Gentleman to put that question to himself. Let him "revise his principles in the light of experience," another of his own phrases. He would find the nationalistic system of economics and policy had failed—was failing all round. It was fighting against modern forces stronger than tariffs. His own deductions might be logical, but they did not "come off"—they did not happen, or they did not produce the results he expected. Take the last assumption first, that because our imports were necessary to us, we were at a disadvantage in the bargain, we should have constantly to reduce our prices, and that our exports would become first difficult, then unattainable. This assumption, if accurate, would by this time be susceptible of statistical proof. It had received, on the contrary, statistical disproof. The Board of Trade had shown that, although both the prices of our exports and imports had greatly decreased in thirty years, yet it was the foreigner who had reduced his prices the most. We were getting more and not less foreign goods for our goods. In this, as in the other deductive arguments of the Protectionist school, the "inevitable" consequences had not "come off." We had not been "engineered" out of lower industries into higher. We had been engineered out of some primary manufactures into some secondary and higher ones. It might not have been intended, but it had happened. Above all other trades we had been "engineered" by foreign tariffs into our lonely and unchallengeable supremacy in shipping, or rather, foreign nations had "engineered" themselves out of the very trade they most envied and most desired. Did the right hon. Gentleman know that we performed more shipping services for the celebrated group of ten protectionist countries than we did for this country itself? Thus they who might refuse our cotton and our iron were forced by the economic law from which there was no escape to accept payment for their exports to us in a form in which they would least wish to do so. Shipping was only one of the trades into which we had been "engineered"; there were other examples. Time would fail to describe the economic process by which the Protectionist policy of other nations had secured the supremacy of the "land of free imports" in the business of merchants, distributors, brokers, bankers, and insurance. To say that we were being "engineered" into inferior trades was to say that bankers, merchants, brokers, shipowners, and officers and crews, skilled engineers and machine makers, were inferior to the old furnace men and puddlers, or the naked and parboiled men he remembered in the sugar-houses in his boyhood. A survey of international commerce as it existed showed that, when a nation endeavoured to monopolise its own market for its own producers, it was forced to surrender the new and higher occupations that were essentially international. It surrendered them to us. Such a nation was fighting against great forces: material—such as the cheapening and quickening of carriage by sea and land; and moral and social—such as the increase of commercial intercourse and information, and the habit of travel; forces which made for international inter-dependence, friendship, and peace. These forces produced new trades: the trades which were the product of these forces were the higher trades; the country that secured these trades was the free-trade country. And thus the nation that held and followed the morally higher theory of trade had its reward even in this world. How these higher forces worked in commerce and counteracted the lower was best illustrated by the very phenomenon on which, not only the right hon. Gentleman, but all tariff reformers most loved to dwell. It was their favourite, the most telling argument—it was that the British manufacturer, shut out of a foreign country by a tariff, took himself, his capital, his machinery, and sometimes his men, and flourished mightily abroad, instead of starving at home, to our national loss. The fact that these emigrations of capital had taken place could not be denied, but they were not so frequent now as they were in the early days of American protection. But he asked the House to notice what followed to the protected state — to notice how retribution followed, and in the end restitution too. When its protected infant industries had grown to be protected giants, when they aspired to an export trade—a "world trade"—they found that, on the whole, the best results in product for a given expenditure could be obtained in the "land of free imports," and one after another they established their works in England. They brought their German education, their American enterprise and organising power, and their capital to this country, when they established themselves on British soil, paid British taxes, and employed the highest and best paid of our working population. There could be no doubt that, during the last few years, the tide had turned, and this immigration of capitalist aliens had much exceeded the flight of British manufacturing capital to protected areas. It was one of the most conspicuous developments of English trade. It should be observed, too, that it was the very best firms who felt most strongly the attractive force of this free-trade country. It was the largest maker of electric machinery in the world that had come from America to establish itself at Rugby; it was the largest maker of mining machinery in the world which had come from Chicago and San Francisco to start near London. The Trafford Park Works of a Pittsburg firm were the largest and best equipped works of their kind in the world. Thus the protection of protectionist countries defeated itself. It drove to our shores and our service the finest products of German education and training, and the best enterprise and most highly specialised skill and capital of America, to work out its full development in the "land of free imports." From every point of view British free trade stood justified—ethically, it was the path of honesty and commercial purity; politically, it was the path of safety and peace; and no less in the sphere of economics, it was the path of profit. Tariff reformers were waiting for the tide to turn—for the pendulum to swing. In his opinion great nonsense was talked about the swing of the pendulum. We had had Free Trade for sixty years, and now, for the first time the question had been again referred back to the constituencies, and it was found that the pendulum had not even begun to swing in sixty years. Did hon. Members opposite really believe that it would swing in sixty-five or seventy years? He thought they would discover that the English people occasionally made a decision that was final and irrevocable. They made such a decision in favour of the freedom of the individual conscience at the time of the Reformation, and three centuries later they made a similar kind of decision in favour of freedom of trade. After an interval of time, from the period of Cranmer and Knox, about equal to that which now separated us from the triumph of Cobden, certain Englishmen objected to the inconvenience of so many individual consciences; they thought the pendulum was swinging back from freedom to protection of conscience. They looked at the continent of Europe, as our protectionists were doing; they saw the Catholic reaction, the counter Reformation, and they thought their hour had come. Like our protectionists, they were national and patriotic; they denied that they wished to go back to the old protection of Rome. It was only to the protection of our own church, our own prelates, our own clergy. Were they right? Did they find that the pendulum had swung? They paid for their error by the loss of their heads. We did not now deal with inconvenient politicians by so drastic a method. Our protectionists had paid for their error by the loss of their seats. Doubtless the ordinary pendulum would swing again to the side of the Conservative Party, but it was his sincere and well-grounded belief that this would not occur until that Party had purged itself of this heresy.

Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN (Birmingham, W.): When I rose a short time ago I did not do so in order to continue the debate on this Resolution. I proposed rather to call attention further to the points raised by my right hon. friend the Leader of the Opposition, and to ask as imperatively as I might for some reply which common courtesy required from the Treasusy Benches. I am not going to follow the hon. Gentleman who has just sat down, and who has made it his business to explain to the House at great length what are the views of my right hon. friend the Member for the City of London on the fiscal question, and my views. We do not accept him as our interpreter. When the proper time comes we will endeavour to explain ourselves in the Amendment we are going to propose. In the meantime we ask the Government to give us some explanation of this Resolution, which is an extraordinary Resolution, as they will find out before the end of the debate. When Mr. Villiers, at the instigation of Mr. Cobden, proposed a Resolution in the House in 1852, what happened? That Resolution was withdrawn or defeated, —I think withdrawn—and an amended Resolution was adopted on the proposition of Lord Palmerston, to which both sides of the House assented. It was a Resolution passed by common consent; but the right hon. Gentlemen opposite surely do not expect that there is any chance of having a joint acceptation of the Resolution to which they have given their support. This Resolution is drawn in a shape which under no conceivable circumstances we could accept. Its object is offensive—I mean in a Parliamentary sense—and we treat it as it is intended to be treated, as a Vote of Censure upon us. If we are to be censured, we want to know for what we are to be censured. When my right hon. friend was speaking, I observed that there was some amusement in certain quarters of the House; but I think that amusement was a little premature. I am not a new Member; I have sat in the House for thirty years, and have seen many majorities — not, perhaps, so truculent as that now possessed by the Government—I have seen great majorities who thought they could ride rough-shod over small minorities.

Mr. DILLON (Mayo, E.): You are catching a little of it yourselves now.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: My experience is that all these attempts have utterly and ludicrously failed; and with that experience behind me, which I share with the hon. Member for East Mayo, I regard with amazement these attempts of the Party opposite to howl us down and to refuse us the explanation which we ask for in the most formal manner. My right hon. friend showed conclusively that this Resolution is pure nonsense; that as it stands it is not likely to be acted upon by the House of Commons which is going to vote upon it; and he asked that it should, at least, be put into a form from which the House at large can understand what it is they are expected to declare their opinion upon in the lobbies. The matters which my right hon. friend has called attention to are not altogether unimportant. Here is the question. It is whether this is a declaration against protection in any form or against any particular form of protection. I think the Prime Minister not very civilly asked if my right hon. friend was serious. [" Oh, oh."] I will alter that, and say the Prime Minister asked most uncivilly if my right hon. friend was serious. [MINISTERIAL cries of "Withdraw."] I will add a question: If you do not mean to distinguish in some way, why did you put these two forms of taxation into the Resolution? Why did you pick out these two particular forms of taxation, which you declare to be protective, from all the hundred other forms of taxation which are protective? I know why it was done. This Resolution, by which this House of Commons, with its 300 Ministerial majority, is going to show its determination to the whole civilised world, is really brought forward because Gentlemen opposite have got so little to do that they must take notice of what they believe to be personal differences between my right hon. friend and myself. I am reminded that I ought to have said that the Government with its majority have not so little to do, but have so little mind to do it. They have chosen to introduce this subject—and let them make the most of it—with the object of showing that there are alleged differences between my right hon. friend and myself, and with this they occupy the attention of their great majority just returned in order to carry large social reforms and to drive the Chinese out of South Africa. It appears to me that they will do the one as soon as the other. In the meanwhile they appear to be having a very good time of it. But, Sir, we will not go on with this debate without having a reply to the questions which have been asked. A most important question was asked—and it was raised during the election—with regard to the protection that now exists on two of the most prosperous trades of the country, the tobacco trade and the cocoa trade, both of which are very largely conducted by gentlemen holding the same political opinions as right hon. Gentlemen on the Treasury Bench. We want to know why they should make the distinction. Are they going to make this distinction? Do you intend to treat tobacco and cocoa in the same way as other articles in the general plan? To that we have a right to have an answer. We want to know how far you are consistent in this sudden zeal to record the opinion of the House of Commons upon this abstract Resolution before the House. Then a much more important question is undoubtedly how far protection is to be allowed in the case of labour. ["Hear, hear" from MINISTERIALISTS.] I notice a cheerful explosion from hon. Gentlemen opposite, but I think they will find out that this is a very serious question before they have done. We were told in almost every constituency that I know of, by people of course who were not responsible, that Chinese labourers were going to be introduced under contract into this country. [Cries of "Oh, oh," and "Name, name."] Oh, I am not afraid, and unlike the Government I am willing to answer. You want to know where it was said; it was said in Dudley, in West Birmingham, my own constituency, and in East Worcestershire. [A MINISTERIALIST, "What, by a Conservative?"] I am not aware of any Conservatives in those two constituencies who have tried to work against their own principles. It was said by agents and others of the Ministerialist Party. Of course, it was absolutely untrue that any contract of the kind had been made or suggested, or thought of. But if you are going to press these free-trade doctrines, are you certain that such a contract may not be thought of or made by persons who may press this free-trade declaration to its logical conclusion. Why on earth are we to be pledged to admit the product of the labour of the lowest Chinese working at 2d. per day in his own country, and at the same time to be precluded from admitting the Chinaman who may come to do a building job, or some contract of that kind?

*MR. J. M. ROBERTSON (Northumberland, Tyneside): Then this matter has been thought of.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: I have heard nothing of the kind myself, but on the other side of the House it might logically come into contemplation.

*MR. J. M. ROBERTSON: What I signified was that while the right hon. Gentleman said that it had not been thought of his own words showed that it had been.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: I repeat that a project of the kind might come under contemplation. Now, what did the Lord Chancellor say the other day upon this subject?

"Think for a moment—"

at any rate, he had given some thought to the question—

"what would happen if there were an attempt to introduce 50,000 or 60,000 Chinese into this country, to compete with the standard of living which has been reached after the endeavours of generations of labour? It would not be tolerated in this country for a moment. All this sophistry would be swept away instantly; in no part of Europe would cheap Chinese labour be allowed to compete with white labour—it would not be tolerated."

Then let us take care that in this Resolution which we are to record we have some regard for the dignity of the House of Commons, and do not cause to be put upon our journals statements and declarations which we have no intention whatever of adhering to. Then there is the question of the Indian tariff. According to this declaration as it stands, that tariff is declared to be protective, and, as such, we ought at once to take steps to abolish or alter it. Do you say it is not protective?

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Yes.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: I appeal to the right hon. Gentlemen to see what they are getting to. They are so anxious to put this matter aside, and seem to think it is of no importance. Here the Indian tariff is already allowed to be not protective, and yet it is a tariff which places upon manufactured goods, without any corresponding excise, a certain tax or duty. That is what we are contending for. Alter the terms of your Resolution to what you mean, not what you say, and it may be that we may, as in 1852, be able to agree with you and pass the Resolution *nem. con.* Meanwhile, I ask the Prime Minister whether he still intends to pass without any notice the respectful request for information which was addressed to him at an earlier period by my right hon. friend.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN shook his head.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: Then, sir, I move that this debate be now adjourned.

Motion made and Question proposed, "That the debate be now adjourned."—(*Mr. J. Chamberlain.*)

MR. DALZIEL (Kirkcaldy Burghs) said they had witnessed a most extraordinary scene during the last two or three speeches, especially during that of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham. Not only did the right hon. Gentleman seek to dominate the Government and the House when he was sitting on the Ministerial side, but he thought that when in opposition he could dictate to the Government how the debate should be conducted. He hoped the Government would conduct this debate in the interests of the House and of the subject they were discussing, and that they would not take their orders from the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The hon. Gentleman has advised the Government not to take their orders from any Member sitting on this side of the House.

MR. DALZIEL: Not from the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The hon. Member's advice is excellent, but my right hon. friend gave no orders. He did what I am convinced would have been done in any similar case, and what has been done in every similar case in my Parliamentary experience. May I remind the hon. Gentleman that so far from its being the view of hon. Gentlemen opposite that a Governnent may carry a debate on in its own way, and speak at its own time through the members which it itself selects, he, I think, was one of those who, with the assent of the Prime Minister, howled for an hour when a Secretary of State was endeavouring to address the House.

Mr. DALZIEL: The right hon. Gentleman has pointedly referred to me. May I be allowed to explain that the circumstances were entirely different? On that occasion the right hon. Gentleman was attacked himself, and he refused to reply to the criticisms that were made.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not follow that. What happened was that there was a debate initiated by the Opposition. The Leader of the House, in the exercise of his discretion, asked one of his principal colleagues to take the first reply, reserving himself for the last word in the debate. A more legitimate proceeding cannot be imagined, and, as I say, the only result was that a Secretary of State for the first time in our Parliamentary history, and with the consent of the then Leader of the Opposition, was howled down for sixty minutes by the clock. Right hon. and hon. Gentlemen are proud of the performance. Now, compare what was then asked by the Opposition to what we ask. After all, there was no question of the then Government evading the issue. I was prepared to speak, and said I was prepared to speak, and the Opposition had no right to complain of two speeches instead of one. Look at what the Government are doing now. We have, as clearly and as respectfully as we can, pointed out the difficulties and ambiguities in the Resolution which the Government themselves have made Government business. We have shown unmistakably that there are difficulties and ambiguities which require explanation and amendment. I venture to say if we are to discuss this Resolution reasonably we must know what interpretation the Government themselves put upon it. I begged the Government, in the interests of their own debate, to tell us the meaning of their own Resolution. That respectful appeal was absolutely ignored by the numerous able gentlemen who sit on the bench opposite, all of whom must know what the Government mean. These cannot be new questions to the Government. They have been giving their days and nights to these economic questions for two or three years. They must know the answer which is needed. Would it not be common courtesy, and would it not be in the interests of debate to have the answer, or do they deliberately think they have a better chance of passing this Resolution in its ambiguous than in its unambiguous form? Considering that this is to bind the House during the whole time of its existence, I cannot believe that they deliberately prefer an ambiguous to an unambiguous Resolution. If it be true, it would be discreditable in the highest degree, but I cannot believe that that is the intention of the Government. In these circumstances, there never was a Motion for adjournment more justified. The hon. Gentleman below the gangway asks us "not to order the Government." We have no power to order them; we recognise our weakness. We know that, numerically at all events, we are inferior, and we accept that position with becoming philosophy. The fact that we are in a minority gives us a claim upon the Government, and when they on their own motion bring forward a Resolution of this unexampled character they should make it plain to the whole House and to the world what it is they mean. Let the Prime Minister not stultify our proceedings by compelling us to go on with this discussion in the dark. Let us know exactly what he means. He knows the answer to every one of these questions. All he has to do is to share his knowledge with the House at large, and then we shall know what it is we are going to vote upon. We shall then be delighted to shorten this discussion by withdrawing the Motion for adjournment.

Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I must find fault with one expression which came from the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Birmingham. He said I made an interjection which was uncivil. [Cries of "Most uncivil."] It was not meant to be uncivil; it was not uncivil; but it was very much to the point. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for the City has been to the country since we last saw him. He made it rather a matter of complaint that this was a Vote of want of confidence in himself and his friends moved by us. We moved the same want of confidence a few weeks ago in the country, and the country voted the want of confidence. [OPPOSITION cries of "No, No," and "Slavery."] The right hon. Gentleman is like the old Bourbons in the oft-quoted phrase—he has learnt nothing. He comes back to this new House of Commons with the same airy graces, the same subtle dialectics, the same light and frivolous way of dealing with a great question, and he little knows the temper of the new House of Commons if he thinks that those methods will prevail here He has put some Questions to me on this Resolution. He has split it up, and tortured it, and pulled it to pieces, and he thinks he has put some posers to us.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I put no posers. I asked for information which I thought the Government could give.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: It would be a very clever Government that could reconcile to each other the Questions which the right hon. Gentleman has put to us. In the first place, he finds fault with us for having selected two principal courses of policy, the establishment of a general tariff and the taxation of foreign corn. They were selected because they were the main topics or features of the policy urged before the country during the election. [OPPOSITION cries of "No, no."] When the two right hon. Gentleman appeared at last to have come together it was on the ground of these two topics. In the celebrated letters which passed these were the two points which were put forward as of first importance. The right hon. Gentleman says we ought to have put in the Resolution the words "and otherwise," because the Resolution as it stands may mean that any other way of bringing in protection would be justifiable. That is the principal dilemma he puts before us. But a little time afterwards he says - "Take care what you do by driving this anti-protection doctrine too hard, because you may find yourselves afterwards obliged to introduce other methods, and this Resolution will preclude them."

The right hon. Gentleman says we have Colonies and a great dependency where there are protective tariffs, and that is inconsistent with this Resolution. I put it to the House whether what I have said does not show how utterly unworthy of the occasion was the speech of the right hon. Gentleman. He first of all rides one horse and then he rides another—two horses perfectly incapable of being ridden together. One of his arguments contradicts the other. Then he says we are to stop the proceedings in this debate, and his Amendments are not to be moved until we have answered these terrible Questions. In so far as I have referred to them, I may have answered them incidentally. I have no direct Answer to give to them. They are utterly futile, nonsensical, and misleading. They were invented by the right hon. Gentleman for the purpose of occupying time in this debate. I say, enough of this foolery! It might have answered very well in the last Parliament, but it is altogether out of place in this Parliament. The tone and temper of this Parliament will not permit it. Move your Amendments, and let us get to business.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN (Worcestershire, E.): I am not going to attempt to traverse the whole of the ground which has been gone over by my two right hon. friends, but I am going to repeat to the House two perfectly plain and pertinent Questions which have been put to the Leader of the House, and to which he has deliberately refused to give a direct Answer. The first Question was whether India has or has not at this moment a protective tariff. That is a Question of great importance in this debate, because every time it has been put a divergent Answer has been given by the supporters of the Government.

MR. DILLON (Mayo, E.): On a point of order, Mr. Speaker, the question before the House is a Motion for the adjournment. Are we entitled to discuss the Indian question?

*MR. SPEAKER: The adjournment was moved because no Answer was given when a Question was put; that is the point to which the debate is limited.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN What I was addressing myself to was this the Government have fathered and made themselves responsible for a Resolution which precludes the establishment of a protective system. [Several MINISTERIALISTS: In this country.] That is another point. If hon. Members wish me to discuss all the points they have raised they will keep me here a long time. We are asked to condemn the establishment of a protective system in this country, and the Leader of the Opposition asks what do they mean by a protective system, and would such a system as is now in vogue in India be protective if adopted in this country? That system includes duties on leather, paper, earthenware, tallow, manufactured tobacco, foodstuffs, such as flour, meal, and fish, coffee, cheese, cocoa, tea, and sugar and on all metal work, on pig iron, and steel in the form of bars, on cotton, hosiery, and on all other manufactured cotton goods.

AN HON. MEMBER: No wonder they have a famine.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: To complete my provisional list, there are also duties on wines and spirits, salt, petroleum, arms, ammunition, etc. Can we establish a similar system in this country without, in the opinion of the Government, establishing a protective system?

*MR. SPEAKER: The right hon. Gentleman, I think, is now arguing the main question. The question before the House is the adjournment, moved because certain Questions were not answered. The debate must be confined to that Motion.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: I will endeavour to confine myself closely to your ruling, Sir. I think I have sufficiently for the purpose re-stated one of the Questions which my right hon. friend put. May we have the whole of these revenue duties without establishing a system of protection? I admit that all this shows the impossibility of continuing the debate without some indication from the Government of what their Resolution really means. Does it condemn the protection now given to the manufacturers of tobacco and cocoa in this country? That Question can be answered by a "yes" or "no." I say it is condemned by the Resolution. I challenge them to contradict it. I ask them one further Question which we shall have to press, Why did the Government select these two industries from which they derived so much political and other support for special privileges?

*SIR EDWIN CORNWALL (Bethnal Green, N.E.) said that it appeared to him that upon this new Motion a new Member might be permitted to express his views as to whether this debate ought to be adjourned on account of the course which it had taken. They desired to pay the greatest respect to the procedure of the House and to all the right hon. Gentlemen opposite who had so long taken part in the debates, but when he saw the Amendments on the Paper what he expected to find was that the Motion would be moved and hon. Members opposite would then put forward their Amendments. What he felt was that the debate on the Motion had been rather a quibble of words. He did not see why the Government should alter its procedure. The Government having decided not to answer the Questions put by the right hon Gentleman categorically, he took the same view. He hoped that the Government would proceed along the lines which they had adopted, and if they did they would find the new Members quite ready to support them. They wished the debate to be conducted as indicated on the Paper, and the departure asked for would not be in accordance with the custom of the House. The Government had taken the right, and the Opposition the wrong course. [Cries of "Divide, divide."]

*MR. BURDETT-COUTTS (Westminster) said he entirely repudiated the suggestion that this debate rested upon a quibble of words. In addition to the Question urged by the ex-Chancellor of the Exchequer with regard to India, two plain Questions had been put to the Government of very grave importance to this country. [MINISTERIAL cries of "Divide, divide," and "Order, order."] One Question was whether they intended to make it impossible by the Resolution to protect the working classes of this country against the importation of Chinese indentured labour here. ["Divide, divide."] In his constituency that suggestion had been made, and it had been made in numerous other constituencies during the election and now when the

Government were claiming to record the decision of the electorate by a Resolution of this House they were afraid to record their own opinion with regard to this question of the possible importation of foreign labour into this country. The next question was one which concerned not this or that Party but the whole House of Commons and the country, and one of which no hon. Member of this House could deny the importance, and that was the question whether they did or did not by this Resolution deprive themselves of the power of placing duties upon imports? [MINISTERIAL cries of "Oh, oh!"] which under circumstances of great importance and possibly of great peril to this country, they might be driven to impose. [Cries of "Divide, divide."] Those questions were not answered by the terms of the Resolution, for they were left vague and ambiguous, and therefore the Government were preferring an ambiguous to a plain Resolution. The Prime Minister repudiated the word "uncivil," when applied to his interruption of the Leader of the Opposition, and then proceeded to commit an outrage upon Parliamentary custom and the recognised canons of Parliamentary manners by accusing the whole of the Opposition front Bench and the Members of the Opposition of "foolery" [MINISTERIAL cries of "Oh, oh," and "Divide"] simply because they were pressing upon the Government questions answers to which were absolutely necessary to make the Resolution clear. That was something more than uncivil. He protested against the brutal tyranny of the Prime Minister's attitude. If the "tone and temper" of the Party opposite were to be judged by the way in which the right hon. Gentleman stood waving his arms to his big battalions, he would very soon find that two could play at that game.

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 115; Noes, 405. (Division List, No. 11.)

AYES.

Anson, Sir William Reynell
Anstruther-Gray Major
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster,Rt,Hn.Hugh O
Ashley, W. W.
Aubrey-Fletcher,Rt.Hn.Sir H.
Balcarres, Lord
Baldwin, Alfred
Balfour,RtHn A.J.(CityLond.)
Balfour, Capt. C. B. (Hornsey)
Banner, John S. Harmood-
Baring, Hon. Guy (Winchester
Barrie, H. T.(Londonderry,N.)
Beach,Hn.Michael Hugh Hicks
Beckett, Hon. Gervase
Bowles, G. Stewart
Boyle, Sir Edward
Bridgeman, W. Clive
Brotherton, Edward Allen
Burdett-Coutts, W.
Butcher, Samuel Henry
Campbell,J.H.M.(Dublin Univ.
Carlile, E. Hildred
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Castlereagh, Viscount
Cave, George
Cavendish,Rt.Hon.Victor C.W.
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Cecil, Lord J. P. J. (Stamford)
Cecil,Lord R.(Marylebone,E..
Chamberlain,Rt.Hn. J. (Birm)
Chamberlain, Rt.HnJ A.(Worc.
Clarke, SirEdward(CityLondon
Coates, E.Feetham (Lewisham
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Courthope, G. Loyd
Craig, Charles Curtis (Antrim, S
Craig,Captain James(Down,E.)
Craik, Sir Henry
Dalrymple, Viscount
Dixon-Hartland Sir FredDixon
Doughty, Sir George
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers
Du Cros, Harvey
Duncan Robert(Lanark,Govan
Faber, George Denison (York)
Fardell, Sir T. George
Fell, Arthur
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Gardner, Ernest (Berks, East)
Gibbs, G. A. (Bristol, West)
Gordon, J. (Londonderry, S.)
Gordon,Sir W.Evans(T'r Ham.
Haddock, George R.
Hambro, Charles Eric
Hamilton, Marquess of
Hardy,Laurence(Kent,Ashford
Harrison-Broadley, Col. H. B.
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Hervey,F.W.F.(Bury S Edm'ds
Hill, Henry Staveley (Staff'sh.)
Hills, J. W.
Houston, Robert Paterson
Hunt, Rowland
Kennaway,Rt.Hn. Sir John H.
Kenyon-Slaney,Rt.Hon.Col W.
Keswick, William
Kimber, Sir Henry
King, Sir HenrySeymour(Hull)
Lee,Arthur H(Hants.,Fareham
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Liddell, Henry
Lockwood, Rt. Hn. Lt.-Col. A
Lowe, Sir Francis William
MacIver, David (Liverpool)
Magnus, Sir Philip
Marks, Harry Hananel (Kent)
Mason, James F. (Windsor)
Meysey-Thompson, Major E.C.
Mildmay, Francis Bingham
Morpeth, Viscount
Muntz, Sir Philip A.
Nield, Herbert
Parker, Sir Gilbert (Gravesend)
Parkes, Ebenezer
Pease, Herbert Pike(Darlingt'n
Percy, Earl
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Ratcliff, Major R. F.
Roberts, S. (Sheffield,Ecclesall)
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Rothschild, Hon. Lionel Walter
Rutherford, John (Lancashire)
Sandys, Lieut.-Col. Thos.Myles
Sassoon, Sir Edward Albert
Scott, Sir S. (Marylebone, W.)
Sloan, Thomas Henry
Smith, Abel H.(Hertford,East)
Smith,F.E. (Liverpool,Walton
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (Strand)
Starkey, John R.
Stone, Sir Benjamin
Talbot,Rt.Hn.J G.(Oxf'dUniv.
Thomson,W.Mitchell (Lanark)
Thornton, Percy M.
Turnour, Viscount
Vincent,Col. Sir C. E. Howard
Walrond, Hon. Lionel

Williamson, G. H. (Worcester)
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Wilson, A. Stanley (York, E.R.)
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George
Younger, George

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Mr. Forster.

NOES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
Acland, Francis Dyke
Adkins, W. Ryland
Agar-Robartes, Hon. T. C.
Agnew, George William
Alden, Percy
Allen, A. Acland (Christchurch)
Allen, Charles P. (Gloucester)
Ambrose, Robert
Armitage, R.
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Astbury, John Meir
Atherley-Jones, L.
Baker, Sir John (Portsmouth)
Baker, Joseph A. (Finsbury, E.
Balfour, Robert (Lanark)
Baring, Godfrey (Isle of Wight)
Barker, John
Barlow, John E. (Somerset)
Barlow, Percy (Bedford)
Barnard, E. B.
Barran, Rowland Hirst
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Beale, W. P.
Beauchamp, E.
Beaumont, W. C. B. (Hexham)
Beck, A. Cecil
Bellairs, Carlyon
Benn, John Williams (Devonport
Benn, W. (T'wr Hamlets, S. Geo.
Berridge, T. H. D.
Bertram, Julius
Bethell, J. H. (Essex, Romford)
Bethell, T. R. (Essex, Maldon)
Billson, Alfred
Birrell, Rt. Hon. Augustine
Black, Arthur W. (Bedfordshire
Boland, John
Bolton, T. D. (Derbyshire, N.E.)
Brace, William
Bramsdon, T. A.
Branch, James
Brocklehurst, W. D.
Brodie, H. C.
Brooke, Stopford
Brunner, J. F. L. (Lancs., Leigh
Bryce, Rt. Hn. James (Aberdeen
Bryce, J. A. (Inverness Burghs
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Buckmaster, Stanley O.
Burns, Rt. Hon. John
Burnyeat, J. D. W.
Burt, Rt. Hon. Thomas
Buxton, Rt. Hn. Sydney Charles
Byles, William Pollard
Cairns, Thomas
Caldwell, James
Cameron, Robert
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H.
Carr-Gomm, H. W.
Causton, Rt. Hn. Richard Knight
Cawley, Frederick
Chance, Frederick William
Channing, Francis Allston
Cheetham, John Frederick
Cherry, R. R.
Churchill, Winston Spencer
Clancy, John Joseph
Clarke, C. Goddard (Peckham)
Cleland, J. W.
Clough, W.
Coats, Sir T. Glen (Renfrew, W.)
Cobbold, Felix Thornley
Cogan, Denis J.
Collins, Stephen (Lambeth)
Collins, Sir Wm. J. (S. Pancras, W
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Corbett, C H (Sussex, E. Grinst'd
Cornwall, Sir Edwin A.
Cory, Clifford John
Cotton, Sir H. J. S.
Cowan, W. H.
Cox, Harold
Craig, Herbert J. (Tynemouth)
Crean, Eugene
Cremer, William Randal
Crombie, John William
Crosfield, A. H.
Cross, Alexander
Crossley, William J.
Cullinan, J.
Dalmeny, Lord
Dalziel, James Henry
Davies, David (Montgomery Co.
Davies, M. Vaughan-(Cardigan
Davies, Timothy (Fulham)
Davies, W. Howell (Bristol, S.
Delany, William
Devlin, Charles Ramsay (Galway
Dickinson, W. H. (St. Pancras, N.
Dickson-Poynder, Sir John P.
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Dillon, John
Dobson, Thomas W.
Dobson, Thomas W.
Dolan, Charles Joseph
Donelan, Captain A.
Duckworth, James
Duffy, William J.
Duncan, C. (Barrow-in-Furness
Dunn, A. Edward (Camborne)
Dunne, Major E. M. (Walsall)
Edwards, Frank (Radnor)
Elibank, Master of
Ellis, Rt. Hon. John Edward
Erskine, David C.
Esmonde, Sir Thomas
Essex, R. W.
Evans, Samuel T.
Everett, R. Lacey
Faber, G. H. (Boston)
Fenwick, Charles
Ferens, T. R.
Field, William
Fiennes, Hon. Eustace
Findlay, Alexander
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Flynn, James Christopher
Foster, Rt. Hon. Sir Walter
Fowler, Rt. Hon. Sir Henry
Fuller, J. M. F.
Furness, Sir Christopher
Gardner, Col. A (Herefordsh. S.)
Gibb, James (Harrow)
Gilhooly, James
Gill, A. H.
Gladstone, Rt. Hn. Herbert John
Glendinning, R. G.
Glover, Thomas
Gooch, George Peabody
Grant, Corrie
Greenwood, G. (Peterborough)
Greenwood, Hamar (York)
Grey, Rt. Hon. Sir Edward
Grove, Archibald
Gulland, John W.
Haldane, Rt. Hon. Richard B.
Hall, Frederick
Halpin, J.
Hammond, John
Harcourt, Rt. Hon. Lewis
Hardie, J. Keir (Merthyr Tydvil
Hardy, George A. (Suffolk)
Harmsworth, Cecil B. (Worct'r)
Harmsworth, R. L. (Caithn'ss-sh
Harrington, Timothy
Hart-Davies, T.
Harwood, George
Haslam, James (Derbyshire)
Haslam, Lewis (Monmouth)
Haworth, Arthur A.
Hazel, Dr. A. E.
Hazleton, Richard
Healy, Timothy Michael
Hedges, A. Paget
Helme, Norval Watson
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Henderson, J. M. (Aberdeen, W)
Henry, Charles S.
Herbert, Colonel Ivor (Mon., S.)
Herbert, T. Arnold (Wycombe)
Higham, John Sharp
Hobart, Sir Robert
Hogan, Michael
Holden, E. Hopkinson
Holland, Sir William Henry
Hooper, A. G.
Hope, John Deans (Fife, West)
Hope, W. Bateman (Somerset, N.
Horniman, Emslie John
Horridge, Thomas Gardiner
Howard, Hon. Geoffrey
Hyde, Clarendon
Idris, T. H. W.
Illingworth, Percy H.
Isaacs, Rufus Daniel
Jackson, R. S.
Jardine, Sir J.
Jenkins, J.
Jones, David Brynmor (Swansea
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Jones, William (Carnarvonshire
Jowett, F. W.
Joyce, Michael
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kennedy, Vincent Paul
Kilbride, Denis
Kincaid-Smith, Captain

King, Alfred John (Knutsford)
Kitson, Sir James
Laidlaw, Robert
Lamb, Edmund G. (Leominster
Lamb, Ernest H. (Rochester)
Lambton, Hon. Frederick Wm.
Lamont, Norman
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Lea, Hugh Cecil (St. Pancras, E.
Leese, Sir Joseph F. (Accrington
Lehmann, R. C.
Lever, A. Levy (Essex, Harwich
Lever, W.H. (Cheshire, Wirral
Levy, Maurice
Lewis, John Herbert
Lloyd-George, Rt. Hon. David
Lough, Thomas
Lundon, W.
Lupton, Arnold
Luttrell, Hugh Courteney
Lyell, Charles Henry
Lynch, H. B.
Macdonald, J. R. (Leicester)
Macdonald, J.M. (Falkirk B'ghs
Mackarness, Frederic C.
Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
Macpherson, J. T.
MacVeagh, Jeremiah (Down, S.
MacVeigh, Charles (Donegal, E.)
M'Arthur, William
M'Crae, George
M'Kean, John
M'Kenna, Reginald
M'Laren, H. D. (Stafford, W)
M'Micking, Major G.
Maddison, Frederick
Mallet, Charles E.
Manfield, Harry (Northants)
Marks, G. Croydon (Launceston
Marnham, F. J.
Mason, A. E. W. (Coventry)
Massie, J.
Masterman, C. F. G.
Meehan, Patrick A.
Menzies, Walter
Micklem, Nathaniel
Molteno, Percy Alfred
Mond, A.
Money, L. G. Chiozza
Montagu, E. S.
Montgomery, H. H.
Mooney, J. J.
Morgan, G. Hay (Cornwall)
Morley, Rt. Hon. John
Morrell, Philip
Morse, L. L.
Morton, Alpheus Cleophas
Murphy, John
Murray, James
Myer, Horatio
Napier, T. B.
Newnes, F. (Notts, Bassetlaw)
Newnes, Sir George (Swansea)
Nicholls, George
Nicholson, Chas. N. (Doncaster
Nolan, Joseph
Norman, Henry
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
Nuttall, Harry

O Brien, Kendal (Tipperary, Mid
O Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny
O Brien, William (Cork)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W.)
O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
O'Doherty, Philip
O'Donnell, C. J. (Walworth)
O'Dowd, John
O'Grady, J.
O'Hare, Patrick
O'Kelly, Conor (Mayo, N.)
O'Kelly, James (Roscommon, N
O'Malley, William
O'Mara, James
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
Palmer, Sir Charles Mark
Parker, James (Halifax)
Paul, Herbert
Paulton, James Mellor
Pearce, Robert (Staffs. Leek)
Philipps, Col. Ivor (S'thampton
Philipps, Owen C. (Pembroke)
Pickersgill, Edward Hare
Pirie, Duncan V.
Pollard, Dr.
Price, C.E (Edinb'gh, Central
Price, Robert John (Norfolk, E.
Priestley, W.E.B. (Bradford, E.
Radford, G. H.
Rainy, A. Rolland
Raphael, Herbert H.
Rea, Russell (Gloucester)
Rea, Walter Russell (Scarboro'
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Redmond, William (Clare)
Rees, J. D.
Rendall, Athelstan
Renton, Major Leslie
Richards, T.F. (Wolverh'mpt'n
Rickett, J. Compton
Ridsdale, E. A.
Roberts, Charles H. (Lincoln)
Roberts, G. H. (Norwich)
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Robertson, J. M. (Tyneside)
Robertson, Sir G. Scott (Bradf'rd
Robinson, S.
Robson, Sir William Snowdon
Roche, Augustine (Cork)
Roche, John (Galway, East)
Rose, Charles Day
Rowlands, J.
Runciman, Walter
Rutherford, V. H. (Brentford)
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Samuel, S. M. (Whitechapel)
Scarisbrick, T. T. L.
Schwann, C. Duncan (Hyde)
Schwann, Chas. E. (Manchester
Scott, A.H. (Ashton under Lyne
Sears, J. E.
Seaverns, J. H.
Seddon, J.
Seely, Major J. B.
Shackleton, David James
Shaw, Charles Edw. (Stafford)
Shaw, Rt. Hon. T. (Hawick B.)
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Shipman, Dr. John G.

Silcock, Thomas Ball
Sinclair, Rt. Hon. John
Smeaton, Donald Mackenzie
Smyth, Thomas (Leitrim, S.)
Snowden, P.
Soares, Ernest J.
Spicer, Albert
Stanger, H. Y.
Stanley, Hn. A. Lyulph (Chesh.
Steadman, W. C.
Stewart, Halley (Greenock)
Stewart-Smith, D. (Kendal)
Strachey, Sir Edward
Straus, B. S. (Mile End)
Strauss, E. A. (Abingdon)
Stuart, James (Sunderland)
Sullivan, Donal
Summerbell, T.
Sutherland, J. E.
Taylor, Austin (East Toxteth)
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
Tennant, E. P. (Salisbury)
Tennant, H. J. (Berwickshire)
Thomas, Abel (Carmarthen, E.)
Thomas, Sir A. (Glamorgan, E.)
Thompson, J.W.H. (Somerset E
Tillett, Louis John
Tomkinson, James
Torrance, A. M.
Toulmin, George
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Verney, F. W.
Vivian, Henry
Wadsworth, J.
Waldron, Laurence Ambrose
Walker, H. De R. (Leicester)
Wallace, Robert
Walsh, Stephen
Walton, Sir John L. (Leeds, S.)
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
Ward, W. Dudley (Southampton
Wardle, George J.
Wason, Eugene (Clackmannan)
Wason, John Cathcart (Orkney)
Waterlow, D. S.
Watt, H. Anderson
Wedgwood, Josiah C.
Weir, James Galloway
Whitbread, Howard
White, J. D. (Dumbartonshire)
Whitehead, Rowland
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Wiles, Thomas
Williams, J. (Glamorgan)
Williams, W. L. (Carmarthen)
Williamson, A. (Elgin and Nairn
Wilson, Henry J. (York., W.R.)
Wilson, J. W. (Worcestersh. N.
Wilson, P. W. (St. Pancras, S.)
Wilson, W. T. (Westhoughton)
Wood, T. M'Kinnon
Woodhouse, Sir J T. (Huddersf'd
Young, Samuel
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—
Mr. George Whiteley and
Mr. J. A. Pease.

Original Question again proposed.

*MR. LLEWELYN WILLIAMS (Carmarthen District) said that as a new Member he would not have presumed to intervene in this debate were it not that he represented a constituency which was dependent to a large extent on what had been described as a "ruined industry," viz., the tin-plate trade. From the early sixties, when it first came into prominence, up to 1890 the South Wales manufacturers of tin-plates had a practical monopoly of the industry; and the result was that the output doubled every ten years, and that large fortunes were rapidly acquired. In 1890 the exports from South Wales amounted to over 400,000 tons, of the annual value of something over £5,500,000, seventy-six per cent. of which was sent to the United States of America. Seeing this valuable trade in the hands of the Welsh manufacturers, the people of America determined to capture it for themselves. They thought the easiest way to do this was to put on a prohibitive tariff in order to exclude Welsh tin-plates from the American market. In 1890 the McKinley tariff was passed, and, as a result, the exports of tin-plates from South Wales to the United States dropped from 300,000 tons per annum to something like 60,000 or 70,000 tons. It would not become him to disguise for a moment the extent of the ravages and destitution which was caused by the tariff. [Sir HOWARD VINCENT: What is to be done?] He would come to that in a moment. His constituents, who had suffered in a way that the right hon. Gentleman opposite had not through the imposition of that tariff, returned an uncompromising free trader, and by an unprecedented majority told the House through him that they did not want the remedies which the hon. Member for Central Sheffield proposed, but that they were perfectly prepared to rest upon a free trade basis. No one who had studied the subject could discover any but one of three ways in which this country could have proceeded to deal with America. The first would have been to threaten to put prohibitive tariffs upon American goods coming to this country. If that were the policy of the Opposition to-day, all he could say was that we exported to America more manufactured goods than we imported from America, and we should be spiting our face by trying to cut off our nose. The next method was to protect raw materials; but what responsible statesman even on the front Opposition Bench would seriously advocate that? Were five millions of people in Lancashire who were dependent on the importation of cotton to be ruined in order to right the wrongs of some hundreds of thousands of people in South Wales who were dependent on the tin-plate industry? The only other method he could think of was to put a tax upon corn; but he did not understand that the Leader of the Opposition for a moment believed in putting a tax on corn sufficient to exclude American corn from the English market. If he did contemplate it, then it would be taxing the food of forty-two millions of people, not to benefit the tin-plate trade, but to avenge the wrong done to the people engaged in that trade. Experience showed that a tariff war was a very long business, and did not right a wrong straight away. It would not benefit the tin-plate trade of South Wales by a penny piece; and the only satisfaction, if such it could be called, would be that the whole country had been involved in its misfortunes. If a prosperous country like the United States said it would not buy in a certain market it could take that course, so long as it was willing to pay the price. Fifteen years ago South Wales was exporting to the United States £4,000,000 worth of tin-plates every year. To-day we were exporting under £1,000,000. During the last fourteen years, Americans, on the authority of Sir John Jenkin, had paid over £20,000,000 sterling in order to exclude Welsh tin-plates. Every year since the Americans had taken to manufacture nearly all the tin-plates for the American market the American consumer had had to pay £2,000,000 sterling a year more than he need have done in order to keep out Welsh tin-plates. At that rate they could exclude any manufactured goods from any market in the world. Were the people of this country prepared to pay a price like that?

And, it being half-past Seven of the clock, the Debate stood adjourned till this Evening's Sitting.

EVENING SITTING.

FREE TRADE.

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [12th March], "That this House, recognising that in the recent General Election the people of the United Kingdom have demonstrated their unqualified fidelity to the principles and practice of Free Trade, deems it right to record its determination to resist any proposal, whether by way of taxation upon foreign corn or of the creation of a general tariff upon foreign goods, to create in this country a system of protection."—(*Sir James Kitson.*)

Question again proposed.

Debate resumed.

* MR. LLEWELYN WILLIAMS, continuing his speech, said that by the mere natural play of economic forces they had compelled America to remain their best customer for tin-plates, and they were now exporting more of these goods to America than any other country, although the Americans had tried in every way they could by protectionist methods to keep our goods out. He wished to explain why it was that this industry, which a very short time ago was on the brink of ruin, recovered so quickly and so completely. Anyone who had studied the recent history of the tin-plate trade would conclude that the industry had recovered because it was carried on in a free-trade country, and that recovery would have been impossible in a protectionist country. Not only had they doubled the demand for these goods at home, but they had also captured every neutral market in the world. Why was it that protectionist American manufacturers, whose output was as great as the output here, could not compete against the manufacturers of this country in the neutral markets of the world? The open competition, which was a consequence of free trade, had led to a more economic production in this country, not by the reduction of wages, for wages had never been so high, but by up-to-date machinery, and other improved methods of manufacture. In every protectionist country the manufacturer looked wholly or mainly to his home markets for his profit, where he had no foreign manufacturer to fear. In 1897, when the American manufacturers were able to supply their own demands, a trust was formed to regulate the price of tin-plates by restricting the output in order that they might get inflated profits. Last year, for instance, for four months during the year, every tin-plate works was shut down in America. They had heard a great deal about the continuity of employment which protection afforded to the working classes. Last year the workmen employed in this trade in South Wales worked continuously week by week all the year round, whilst in America, where the output was as large as ours, they failed to work at all for four months in the year.

SIR HOWARD VINCENT: Can you tell us what wages they get?

* MR. LLEWELYN WILLIAMS said that they got higher wages, but the work was not continuous. What was the good of getting higher wages if for half the year they were out of employment? Besides, the American workman had to pay more for his food and for all he required; therefore, in all these respects the Welsh workmen were in a better position than the workmen across the Atlantic. The consequence was that, although the total output of the tin-plate manufacturers of America was 600,000 tons, they exported only 7,000 tons; while the South Wales manufacturers, in addition to exporting 300,000 tons to all the other countries in the word, had sent 60,000 tons to America. The House had heard a great deal about dumping. It should be remembered that steel bars were in one sense a manufactured article, but in another sense they were raw material. They were at any rate the raw material of the tin-plate industry. When steel was £7 a ton in this country the American and German manufacturers began dumping the goods at £4 10s. and £4 15s. a ton, and the result was that the steel manufacturers in this country had to reduce their price to £5 a ton. It was the smaller manufacturers who were more dependent upon these steel bars, and it should not be forgotten that the amount of dumped

steel bars was comparatively small, although it was just sufficient to break down the steel monopoly in this country and keep the price at something like its natural level. It was common knowledge that in this country the demand for steel was greater than the supply. Twelve months ago there were some shares sold in one of the steel works near Swansea, and it was stated then that for the five preceding years those shares had earned an average dividend of 49½ per cent., and that did not represent all the profits, because a large amount was annually placed to the credit of a reserve fund which if taken into account would have made the average profit 71 per cent. So much for the injurious effects of dumping. It had already been pointed out that we had a great trade with Russia in wheat — that we were importing between nine and ten millions worth of grain from Russia. The effect of this was that when a tin plate manufacturer wanted to send a cargo of tin plates to Odessa he could do so much more cheaply, because the shipowner could always rely upon a return cargo to this country. In this respect the American manufacturers were placed at a disadvantage, and therefore these lower freights for our goods placed a distinct premium on British manufactures. The system of drawbacks had ensured for us the American market. It had been constantly urged that it was not the consumer that paid a tariff imposed upon an imported article but the foreigner. Apparently American protectionists by their action did not believe that. In 1896 the Standard Oil Trust found a very serious competitor in the English market in the Russian Oil Company, and they came to the conclusion that the only way in which they could compete was to do away with the tariff on the importation of tin plates. The Standard Oil Trust appealed to Congress and the system of drawbacks was established. Under this system a Welsh firm sending tin plates to America had to pay a 45 per cent. tariff and then in America these tin plates were manufactured into all sorts of cans for re-exportation to this country. When the Standard Oil Trust re-exported the Welsh tin plates in the shape of oil cans they were allowed a drawback of 99 per cent. on the original tariff. The result of all this was that tenders had been invited and Welsh firms had invariably captured the contracts, and they were now sending between 60,000 and 70,000 tons of tin plates to America. What measure of retaliation could have brought about that result? In this way they had compelled America to remain their best customer without using any threats or creating any bad blood or exciting strife and without impairing the good understanding which existed between the two countries. We had compelled America, not by methods of barbarism, but by appealing to its enlightened sense of self-interest, to buy in our markets the goods they needed. The idea of a self-contained and a self-sufficient State was an old one. It was the idea that underlay the tribal system; it caused the ancient Roman to denote by the same word a stranger and an enemy; it made the Augustan poet complain that—

> "Heaven's providence in vain
> Has sever'd countries with the estranging main,
> If vessel's ne'ertheless
> With impious keels the sacred bars trangress."

But it was not the modern idea. To the modern world the ocean was not "the estranging main," but the great highway of the world's trade and commerce. No country, however great its natural resources or however powerful; no empire, however extensive or however varied its products, could afford to live in splendid isolation from the rest of the world. Man depended upon man and country upon country. The brotherhood of man was a Christian doctrine; the solidarity of mankind was an economic truth. The upholders of the present system had never claimed for free trade that it was a perfect system or a panacea for all the evils the people of the country were suffering from. He hoped that when the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board came to deal with the unemployed question he would have some remedy to propose to tide over the temporary difficulty of those men who were willing and able to work but could not find employment. Free traders had never said that the distribution of wealth in this country was what it ought to be. All that they claimed for free trade was that, in a complicated civilisation like that of England with all its various trades, to allow trade to flow into its natural channels was the best system that man had yet devised for the creation of wealth. But the distribution of wealth was altogether another matter. He was glad to think that they had now in office the most democratic Cabinet and the most democratic Prime Minister that had ever ruled over the destinies of this great Empire. He hoped the Government would not meet the propaganda of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Birmingham by dry arguments drawn from political economy or by statistical abstracts derived from the Board of Trade. They could easily refute the right hon. Gentleman by those means, but this House expected more from the Government. They expected that they would see to it that the large measures of social reform which the House was returned to bring about would be carried to a definite issue before the expiration of the present Parliament. When this Parliament came to an end and they were face to face once more with their countrymen, they would meet them, erect and unafraid, confident in the knowledge that what they could they had done to ease the life and lighten the burdens of those who, humanly speaking, had no help but in them.

*Mr. SNOWDEN (Blackburn) quoting from the Resolution the phrase, "the people of the United Kingdom have demonstrated their unqualified fidelity to the principles and practice of Free Trade," said that that was a matter of opinion on which they were justified in differing very considerably. There were those sitting in this House who held strongly to the opinion that they occupied their present position owing to the indignation of the country at the importation of Chinese labour into South Africa. The hon. and learned member for Waterford considered that the result of the elections was an approval by the public of Home Rule for Ireland, and with that conclusion he was not prepared to disagree. The right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War had told them that if there was one thing to which this House was committed more than another it was retrenchment in our national finances. He felt sure that when the Minister for Education introduced his promised Education Bill he would claim that the Government, by the verdict of the constituencies, had received an unmistakeable mandate to repeal certain provisions in the last Act. Perhaps he would be permitted to add one more reason why he thought the constituencies at the recent election expressed an opinion very different to that expressed by the electors five or six years ago. The result of the election was not so much an expression of opinion upon any one of these particular questions as the expression of a moral indignation amongst the people at the waste and mis-management which had marked the previous years. The Liberal Party had been returned by what had been more than once described by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham as an enormous majority. They were returned and strengthened two-fold in numbers. He was associated with a Party which placed before the electors a definite and distinct policy, and who by that policy, and therefore the approval of the electorate, had been returned to the House with their numbers increased eight times over. If the electorate of this country expressed their opinion upon any question emphatically at the recent election it was that the energies and activities of Parliament in the future should be directed wholeheartedly, in no timorous way, to the treatment of great industrial problems. Might he say to free traders on the Ministerial side that it was upon the very existence of these evils, which sixty years of free trade had failed to mitigate or palliate, that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham had founded his appeal to the country? Right hon. Gentlemen and hon. Gentlemen on the Liberal Benches took exception to the statement he had just made that sixty years of free trade had failed to mitigate to any great extent our grave industrial and social evils. They had the admission of the First Lord of the Treasury that one-third of our population—which meant nearly 40 per cent. of our working-class people—were on the verge of hunger, perpetually struggling to keep their bodies and souls together. It was not by the sum total of our iron exports, or tin-plate exports, or by the increase of the Board of Trade Returns that they were going to ensure the happiness and prosperity of the people. They must estimate the result of the application of sixty years of a particular policy, not by the aggregate amount of wealth it had succeeded in creating, but by the extent to which it had diffused happiness and contentment amongst the people. The Party with which he was associated, while standing as firmly as the most ardent members of the Cobden Club to the maintenance of our Free Trade policy, declined to fall down and worship this god. They were prepared to admit that there was a great deal of truth in what was expressed by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham as to the changed conditions of our industries during the past sixty years. Conditions were constantly changing. They agreed with the statement that the time had come when they should take stock of our industrial position. Our industrial circumstances were not what they were sixty years ago, when we practically stood alone amongst the manufacturing nations of the world. Since then other nations had become their own producers, and to a great extent they were becoming our competitors in all the markets of the world. Sixty years had falsified the expectations that foreign restrictions upon trade would be removed. There had not been a continuous improvement in the condition of the people during the last sixty years. He was prepared to maintain a statement often made, but almost as often disputed, that the rich were getting richer and the poor poorer. The Returns of pauperism presented to the House only a week ago showed that under every head of pauperism there had been a continuous increase during the past five or six years. Turning to employment Returns, they would find a decline in the average percentage of employment since the war. [MINISTERIAL cheers.] He was glad to hear those cheers; they evidently arose from a conviction that the increase of pauperism during the past five years had been due to the war. During the last five years since the war there had been an average annual increase in our foreign trade of £182,000,000. During the last two years there had been an increase in the incomes assessed to income-tax of £101,000,000 a year, as compared with the two years before the war. Could those hon. Gentlemen who believed that the increase in pauperism, and the decline in wages and employment were due to the war, explain how it was that with increasing wealth, more cotton goods, more woollen goods, more boots and shoes, and more food, there should be more starvation? He wished for an explanation how it was that while there was an increased income among the people there should be this decline of employment and wages. He agreed at least with the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham to the extent of recognising the need for taking stock, looking round, and trying to see whether it would be possible to effect any changes in our industrial system which would enable us as an industrial nation to equip ourselves more efficiently and effectively for international competition. After that admission of agreement with the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham he parted company with him. He disagreed altogether with the proposals put forward by the right hon. Gentleman to meet the present industrial condition, and as a means to enable us to meet world-wide competition more effectively. Although it was not capable of dealing as an active force with the distribution of wealth and the social evils and conditions, free trade was a necessary condition. He did not wish it to be understood by the statement he made just now that he denied that any improvement had taken place in the condition of the people. He was prepared to admit that a considerable improvement had taken place, but it was not due to free trade. It must not be forgotten that contemporaneously with the practice of free trade there had been other and active forces at work which were responsible for this improvement in the condition of the working classes of this country. Did free traders forget the Factory Acts, the co-operative movement, the Municipal Corporations Act, and trade organisation which had done so much for the working classes during the past sixty years? He did not believe that it was historically accurate to attribute the terrible condition of the people in the years previous to the repeal of Corn Laws entirely to protection. In the seventeen years preceding the repeal of the Corn Laws the capital wealth of this country, due chiefly to the profitable character of our manufactures, increased by £2,000,000,000. The people were poor in the days before the repeal of the Corn Laws, but not because the employers could not afford to pay higher wages. The fortunes then of manufacturers in the northern towns were made by profits of thousands per cent. His Party disagreed altogether with the proposals of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham for dealing with conditions which they in common condemned, but they recognised that this country had not that isolated position in the markets of the world which was ours in times gone by. The sooner we recognised that fact and adapted ourselves to the changed circumstances the better for the commercial and social interests of this country. What his Party proposed, however, was an extension of free trade, the freedom of industry from the protective monopolies which now put a greater burden upon British industry than any other commercial nation had to bear. Hon. Members with whom he was associated were able to answer the question which had been put that afternoon as to how the Government could meet the cost of social reforms to which they were committed. They could tell the Government where the means could be found for financing any and all of those schemes of social reform, and at the same time lighten the burden on industry, so as to enable our commerce to hold its own in the markets of the world for another twenty years to come. This country paid in national expenditure three times as much per head of the population as did our most dangerous rival, the United States. Instead of proposing schemes for dealing with these conditions, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham brought forward schemes which, if carried into effect, could only aggravate every industrial and social evil which afflicted our commerce and industries to-day. Why did not the right hon. Gentleman instead try to redeem some of the promises of reform he made in other days? The right hon. Gentleman might turn his attention to doing something to lessen the burden of £350,000,000 a year which landlordism placed upon the people of this country. If the right hon. Gentleman wanted our commercial men to compete better with foreigners let him turn his attention to the question of railway rates. By turning attention to that matter economies could be effected which would lighten the burden on industry twice as much as the right hon. Gentleman expected from his 10 per cent. duty on manufactured articles. They might go further and turn their attention to another still heavier burden—he referred to private ownership in coal supply and the system of mining rights and royalties. Upon every ton of steel rails manufactured in West Cumberland there was a mining royalty of 6s. a ton, and even with this burden British steel manufacturers were able to come within 3d. a ton of their Belgian competitors. In Belgium the unit of the royalty did not exceed 8d. a ton, and then, instead of going into the pocket of the useless and unnecessary landlords, as it did here, it went into the coffers of the State. During the course of the protectionist campaign this country had been asked to follow the example of Germany. Even if the condition of the German workmen as a whole were superior, which it was not, to that of British workmen, it did not follow that that condition was owing to the fact that they were living under a system of protection. Take the case of America. By the operation of a protective policy there, in the fourteen years preceding the year 1900, the cost of living in the United States had risen from 25 to 50 per cent., and in the meantime there had been practically no increase whatever in the wages paid to the workpeople. They were not justified, therefore, in saying that the condition of the workpeople in any country was due solely to its fiscal policy. By the operation of the protective tariff in America the purchasing power of the workman's wage there had been reduced by from one-third to one-half within the last fourteen years. If there were certain classes in Germany whose condition compared favourably with that of the workmen in this country it was not due to protection, but was in spite of protection. It was brought about by the development of the railway system, the better educational system, and other causes. While we in this country stood by free trade, we must recognise that free trade was merely a condition and not an active force. We must not be content with an increase in our trade and income-tax returns. We must recognise that grave industrial and social conditions did exist. The Government had received from the country a mandate to pass large measures of social reform dealing with such matters as the land question, the railway monopoly, the mining royalty monopoly, and to redress social inequalities by a free use of the power of taxation. The Leader of the Opposition had asked how it was possible, except by imposing a tax upon the necessaries of life, to find the means whereby schemes of social reform could be carried out. Within the last ten years a mere handful of people in this country had increased their incomes by more than £100,000,000. Unlike the 40,000,000 people referred to by the Prime Minister, that mere handful of people before their incomes were increased in this way were not on the verge of starvation. If the whole of that £100,000,000 of income had been taken by the State for the purposes of social reforms not one of that mere handful of people would have been reduced to poverty or would have been a single penny worse off than they were five or six years ago. Whether the Prime Minister liked it or not, the country had determined that proposals of that kind should receive the attention of Parliament. He had been hoping that the Liberal Party had learned wisdom during the years they had been wandering in the wilderness. He hoped the Government would turn into Acts of Parliament the beautiful sentiments contained in perorations to their speeches when in opposition. The Labour Members had been returned expressly to do something to better the lives of the common people. They wanted to put some brightness and joy into the lives of those whose days were a bitter and never-ending struggle to keep body and soul together, and who were ever confronted with the terrible nightmare of extreme poverty in their old age. In order to make more comfortable the declining years of the people, he implored the Government to realise their great responsibilities, and to make the very most of their opportunities, and he trusted that when the end of their term of office came they would have the joy and satisfaction of knowing that by their efforts they had done something to bring nearer to the poor people of this country the day of universal peace, righteousness, and joy.

*MR. F. E. SMITH (Liverpool, Walton) said that in whatever section of the House hon. Members might sit, or however profoundly they might differ from some of the economic views which underlay the remarks of the hon. Member for Blackburn, they would all at least desire to join in a tribute to the energy and ability displayed in the speech he had just delivered. He (Mr. Smith) confessed that he had been struck by the admissions which had been made by those hon. Members who had spoken in favour of this Resolution. He wished to ask hon. Members on the Ministerial side at the height of their triumph to consider for a moment what was the sum total of their criticism. The hon. Member for Blackburn had just told the House that the result of sixty years of free trade had been an absolute failure to ameliorate the condition of the working classes. That was a statement with regard to which the Opposition stood on common ground with the hon. Member. Where, however, they parted company with him was not on the unreasonableness of his criticisms as to the necessity of ameliorating the condition of the working classes, but when he proceeded to say that they could deal with these thirteen million people on the verge of starvation by a revision of railway rates, by unexplained dealing with mine owners, or by loose, mischievous, and predatory proposals affecting those who happened to own land. He would entreat hon. Members to make quite sure that they had cleared their minds of cant upon this question. When they heard vague and general proposals put forward at the expense of large incomes, without any precise explanation as to the principle upon which those incomes were to be appropriated or tapped for the service of those who had them not, he should like to make this reservation, that there were very few Members in this House, whether in Opposition or on the Benches opposite, or below the gangway, whose principal business occupation it was not to get as large an income as they honestly could. If there was one profession to which that charge could not be applied it was perhaps the profession to which he belonged. It was when one looked to see how these admissions would be followed up by some practical remedy that one became profoundly conscious of the constructive shortcomings of the Cobdenism of to-day. He was a perfectly unrepentant Member of the Tariff Reform League. He did not know how many members of the League there might be in the House; he dared say that a division might show that they were not more numerous than the representatives of the Liberal League. He had at least the satisfaction of reflecting that if tariff reform turned out not to be the winning horse they had not necessarily finally compromised their political futures. They had in hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite an admirable example of how to cut the painter of a similar league with the maximum of political advancement and the minimum of fidelity to a founder. He supposed the Resolution had been charitably designed to call attention to differences existing in the Opposition. He should have thought that they might have looked to hon. Gentlemen opposite for a little more charity. Hon. Gentlemen opposite had had analogous difficulties. The question of when a tariff became protective was no doubt difficult but not more so than the conundrum "When is a slave not a slave?" and the problem when, if ever, preferential treatment should be given to Roman Catholic schools. All great political Parties had skeletons in the cupboard, some with manacles on and some with only their hands behind their backs.† The quarrel he had with hon. Gentlemen opposite was that they showed an astonishing indelicacy in attempting to drag the skeleton of their opponents into the open. Not satisfied with tomahawking his colleagues in the country, they asked the scanty remnant in the House to join in the scalp dance. He did not think they could complain of the tone of a single speech which had been made from the Opposition side of the House. They were particularly pleased with the remarks which had fallen from the hon. Member for East Toxteth, for he had entered the House, not like his new colleagues, on the crest of the wave, but rather by means of an opportune dive. Every one in the House would appreciate his presence, because there could be no greater compliment paid to the House by a Member than that he should be in their midst when his heart was far away, and it must be clear to all who knew the hon. Member's scrupulous sense of honour that his desire must be at the present moment to be amongst his constituents who were understood to be at least as anxious to meet him. The Resolution before the House consisted of two parts. In the first they were asked to recognise the merits of what was described on an obscure prescriptive principle as free trade, and in the second they were invited to register the proposition that the country gave an unqualified verdict in its support. The word "unqualified" was in itself ambiguous and might have more than one meaning. If they said a man was an unqualified slave they meant that his condition could be honestly described as completely servile and not merely as semi-servile. If, on the other hand, they said a man was an unqualified medical practitioner, or an unqualified Under-Secretary, they meant that he was entitled to no particular respect, because he had not passed through the normal period of training or preparation. He suggested *a priori* that the word was used in the first sense in the present Motion. But perhaps it was necessary to distinguish further. When hon. Gentlemen opposite were successful at the polls it was probably used in the first sense. In the comparatively few cases in which he and his friends were successful it was used in the second. Birmingham, under circumstances which would never be effaced from the memory of hon. Gentlemen on whichever side of the House they sat, displayed the rare and beautiful quality of political constancy, and voted sold for tariff reform. [Laughter]. The result was sneered at in the spirit of that laughter which they had just heard as a triumph for Tammanyism, or, more profoundly analysed by an eminent Nonconformist divine, as an instance of that mysterious dispensation which occasionally permitted the ungodly to triumph. Hon. Gentlemen opposite were very much more successful controversialists than hon. Members on his side. It was far easier, if one was a master of scholarly irony and a charming literary style, to describe protection as a "stinking rotten carcase" than to discuss scientifically whether certain limited proposals were likely to prove protective in their incidence. It was far easier, if one had a strong stomach, to suggest to simple rustics, as the President of the Board of Trade did, that, if the Tories came into power they would introduce slavery on the hills of Wales.

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† See (4) *Debates*, clii., 156

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE (Carnarvon Burghs): I did not say that.

*MR. F. E. SMITH said the right hon. Gentleman would no doubt be extremely anxious to forget it if he could; but, anticipating a temporary lapse of memory, he had in his hand the *Manchester Guardian* of January 16, 1906, which contained a report of this speech. He found the right hon. Gentleman said—

> "What would they say to introducing Chinamen at 1s. a day into the Welsh quarries? Slavery on the hills of Wales! Heaven forgive me for the suggestion!"

He himself had no means of judging how Heaven would deal with persons who thought it decent to make such suggestions. He could only venture to express a doubt whether any honest politician would ever acquit the right hon. Gentleman of having deliberately given the impression to those he thus addressed that if the Conservative Party were returned they were in danger. The alternative construction was that the right hon. Gentleman thought it worth his while in addressing ignorant men [Cries of "No"]—in relation to the right hon. Gentleman they were ignorant; was that disputed?—to put before ignorant men an abstract and academic statement as to Chinese labour on the hills of Wales; and if that was not the impression they were meant to derive, why employ the fatal ambiguity of the reference to Chinese slavery as a conceivable prospect on the hills of Wales? Was even Manchester won on the free trade issue? [Cries of "Yes."] He heard hon. Gentlemen opposite say "Yes." He thought they must be from the South of England. If Manchester was won on the free trade issue, perhaps hon. Gentlemen would explain why repeated meetings were devoted to the less effective and attractive cry, and specialised speakers like Mr. Creswell brought down to discourse to the electors on the evils of Chinese slavery. He knew that owing to the eccentricities of geographical boundaries Salford was not technically a part of Manchester, but a Salford Member was near enough to wear the green turban of a pilgrimage to Cobden's Mecca. The hon. Member for Salford had stated that he was returned to the House pledged to urge insistently on the Government which had profited by a false cry the immediate repatriation of coolies on the Rand. Would he be told in that case that the electors were giving an unqualified verdict for Cobdenism, or for what was called in this Resolution free trade? He did not think that the hon. Gentleman who fought so strenuously in East Manchester would get up and tell the House that in his constituency the verdict was an unqualified one for free trade. He had some choice specimens of the bread that the hon. Member for East Manchester threw on the waters in order, he supposed, to elicit this unqualified verdict. He was reported in the *Manchester Guardian* of 13th January to have said that the Chinese had not been the means of bringing one single piece of white labour to the whole of South Africa. The hon. and learned Gentleman appeared to think that white labour was introduced in slabs. He said—

> "You are voting, if you vote for Mr. Balfour, for the exclusion of white labour from South Africa."

—not for Cobdenism. The hon. Gentleman continued—

> "Where was that thing going to stop?"

which was what they would like to know to-day.

> "Were they going to have Chinamen working in the mills at Bradford? Let the people of this division show by their votes"

—what? Their devotion to free imports? No—

> "That they would have none of this wretched coolie labour in South Africa, and strike a blow for freedom to-morrow at the polls."

There was an interesting point of analogy between the hon. and learned Gentleman and the "wretched coolies" of whom he had so low an opinion. To-day he was in, and they were in, and it rather looked as if they were going to remain in as long as he and his friends. It was in this way that the poorer districts of Manchester were captured—Cobden's Manchester. Did the hon. Member the Under-Secretary for the Colonies use his great and growing local influence on behalf of what in his heart and conscience he knew to be the truth? He said "on behalf of what he knew to be the truth" because the hon. Member was reported in the *Manchester Guardian* as having said on June 12th, 1903, that he was quite sure that supplies of native or Chinese labour would have to be obtained. He would not weary the House with the whole of the Under-Secretary's peroration. He rather thought it had been at the disposal of both Parties in the House before undertaking a provincial tour. It was all very well for the hon. Member to come to the House and state in the debate on the Address that he attempted to confine the issue at the election to the single point of Cobdenism, or to the single merits of free trade, that he had no responsibilty for an incendiary campaign. To that he replied *Proximus Ucalegon ardebat*, and construed it—Very close to him the hon. and learned Member for East Manchester was letting off Chinese crackers. The hon. Gentleman did not then explain that the coolie processions were merely contributions to the discussion of the problem of the unemployed or that slavery was a terminological inexactitude. He took what he could get and thanked God for it. The *rôle* of the receiver of stolen reputations was rather less respectable in the eyes of the man of spirit than that of the principal thief. He admitted that the question of cheap food was brought forward in many constituencies with great persistency and ingenuity. The hon. Member for North Paddington, with an infinitely just appreciation of his own controversial limitations, relied chiefly on an intermittent exhibition of horse sausages as a witty, graceful, and truthful sally at the expense of the great German nation. He did not understand what the Secretary of State for War meant by saying that the Liberal Party had no ideas. The Liberal League always was a drag upon the holy wheel of progress. He did not suppose that, now the fight was over, now that their strategy had been so brilliantly successful, and away from the licence of the platform and in the House, where their statements could be met and dealt with, hon. Gentlemen would deny that the immediate effect of a 2s. duty on corn would be an illimitable development of colonial acreage suitable for the growth of wheat. [Cries of, "Oh, oh," and laughter.] He was astonished to hear sounds of derisive dissent, for he rather thought that at the time when Lord Rosebery, from whom he was quoting, made that prediction to frighten the English farmer from tariff reform, hon. Gentlemen were in the same tabernacle, furrow, or whatever was the momentary rendezvous of the Party. At the moment they would recollect the other ship looked like sinking—there was a temporary slump in the "methods of barbarism" section. He ventured to ask them, in the candour of victory, Did any of them really doubt that Canada was equal, under judicious stimulation, to supplying the whole English consumption of wheat? [Cries of, "No, no."] Sir Wilfrid Laurier said it could, and hon. Gentlemen said it could not, and perhaps the Under-Secretary for the Colonies, whom he was sorry not to see in his place, would put Sir Wilfrid Laurier on the black list with Lord Milner, and refuse to protect him any longer. Did the House recollect La Fontaine's insect—the species was immaterial—which expired under the impression that it had afforded a life-long protection to the lion in whose carcass its life was spent? But there was hardly a Canadian statesman who did not go further than Sir Wilfrid Laurier in the direction of tariff reform. Earlier in the debate some reference was made to Mr. Fisher, and he desired to speak of Mr. Fisher's views and ability with great respect; it was not necessary to vilify any colonial politician with whom you disagreed. An official report ordered by the United States Government in 1902 found the district contributing to Winnipeg capable of supplying enough wheat to provide for the consumption of the world. If this were true, or half true, what became of the nightmare of apprehension which had made hon. Gentlemen opposite so infinitely tedious for the last few years? If an illimitable supply of Canadian corn was coming in untaxed, what became of the little loaf? Once again he recognised in hon. Gentlemen opposite their electioneering masters and he complimented them, if not on a unqualified verdict, upon an unqualified pictorial inexactitude. He must not forget that some hon. Gentleman opposite ventured upon a more ambitious line of argument, and, in doing so, permanently enriched the economic knowledge of the country. They had learned that it was not a disadvantage, but rather an advantage, that English factories should be removed abroad. He owned that hon. Gentlemen were not consistent when they did not offer a bounty to a capitalist to remove his works abroad. Let them drive from the country everybody who had work to give, and then wave banners, like the hon. Member for Merthyr Tydvil, in the "Right to Work Committee." A fortnight ago hon. Gentlemen opposite were expressing beautiful sentiments about the feeding of starving children. If the matter had been pressed to a division he should have voted with them, but he should have done so without prejudice to his convictions as to the economic system which gave rise to the necessity. He should like to know how hon. Gentlemen opposite explained the growing poverty of the poor. [MINISTERIAL cries of "The War."] Since this House of Commons met they had heard a great deal about the war. He would suggest to hon. Gentlemen, as a humble admirer of their methods, that if they wished for targets in that matter they ought not to aim at the Opposition Benches, but at right hon. Gentlemen who sat on the Front Government Bench. Hon. Gentlemen opposite should remember that the present Secretary of State for War had said that the Boers waged the war not only with the object of maintaining their independence, but also to undermine our authority in South Africa, and the present Attorney-General had said that the war could be shown to be as just as it was inevitable, and was defensible on the grounds of freedom. The circumstances of which they complained were anterior to the war. While the only panacea which hon. Gentlemen opposite could suggest was the employment of broken-down artisans to plant trees and construct dams against the encroachment of the sea, the Unionist Party need not be discouraged by their reverses at the polls. They would say of the goddess who presided over the polls as Dryden said of Fortune in general—

"I can enjoy her while she's kind;
But when she dances in the wind,
And shakes her wings, and will not stay,
I puff the prostitute away."

Was the verdict unqualified having regard to the aggregate number of votes polled on behalf of the Liberal Members? The votes polled at the last election for Liberal, Labour, and Nationalist candidates were 3,300,000, while those polled for tariff reform candidates and other gentlemen sitting around him were 2,500,000. He gathered that it was suggested that his figures were wrong. [Cries of "Yes."] They very probably were. He got them from the *Liberal Magazine*. He did not know whether the Minister of Education was responsible for them before he gave up the hecatomb line of business for the Christian toleration and charity department. He ventured to suggest to hon. Gentlemen opposite that the figures he had quoted, so far as they were accurate, were not altogether discouraging to those who for the first time in the nation's history challenged the verdict of the country on the issue of tariff reform. What would hon. Gentlemen who represented Ireland say if it were suggested that they were Cobdenites? Would one of them get up to say that Cobdenism had brought prosperity or success to Ireland, or to guarantee that a representative Irish Parliament would not introduce a general tariff on manufactured articles? The jury who gave this unqualified verdict were unaccountably silent. The spectacle of the Cobdenite hen cackling over a protectionist duckling of her own hatching in Ireland would add a partially compensating element of humour even to the prospect of Home Rule. He had heard the majority on the other side of the House described as the pure fruit of the Cobdenite tree. He should say they were begotten by Chinese slavery out of passive resistance. He read a short time ago that the Free Church Council claimed among its members as many as 200 of hon. Gentlemen opposite. [MINISTERIAL cries of "Oh!"]

MR. CROOKS (Woolwich): He is doing no harm.

*MR. F. E. SMITH said that the Free Church Council gave thanks publicly for the fact that Providence had inspired the electors with the desire and the discrimination to vote on the right side. He did not in the least mind being cheated at cards; but he found it a trifle nauseating if his opponent then proceeded to ascribe his success to the favour of the Most high. What the future had in store for right hon. and hon. Gentleman opposite he did not know. He, however, heard that the Government proposed to deny to the Colonial Conference of 1907 free discussion on the subject which the House was now debating, so as to prevent the statement of unpalatable truths. He knew that he was the representative of an insignificant numerical minority in this House, but he ventured to warn the Government that the people of this country would never forget or forgive a Party which, in the hey-day of their triumph, denied to the infant Parliament of the Empire one jot or tittle of that ancient liberty of speech which their predecessors in that House had vindicated for themselves at the point of the sword.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: We have now been debating the Motion of my hon. friend the Member for Colne Valley all the afternoon and evening, and we have not yet heard from the other side of the House a single word in support of the merits of their case. When I heard the hon. Member who has just sat down proclaim himself in a very brilliant speech "an unrepentant member of the Tariff Reform League," I thought that at last we were going to have a clear announcement of the principles of fiscal reform. But the great Amendment, framed after so much consideration, has not yet been moved.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: There is plenty of time.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: No, no; the right hon. Gentleman is not in command of the House now. We have been the victims for years, and it is our turn now. The last word on fiscal reform, the last compromise, the outcome of the great Valentine treaty, has not yet been forthcoming. I do not know whether the Amendment is going to be moved.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Of course, certainly, if we get ordinary freedom of discussion.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: I am afraid that the right hon. Gentleman's ideas of freedom of discussion have altered very considerably since the time when he sat on this side of the House. I remember that his notions then were such that we could not get a debate on fiscal reform at all; and when by the fortune of the ballot we succeeded in securing an evening of three hours, the right hon. Gentleman grudged us even that, and, rather than listen to us so long, ran away. As far as I can see, fiscal reform is still running. The right hon. Gentleman was eager to make a speech on the subject; but not a word did he say about the latest development of his great theory. We have not had a syllable from the other side of the House as to their proposals.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: It is your Resolution.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: But there are seven Amendments on the Paper from the other side of the House. They can truly say, "We are seven"—seven different policies. Now what is the right hon. Gentleman's policy? The only indication he gave was this. The right hon.

Gentleman said that, in his judgment, the Motion of the hon. Member for Colne Valley was a vote of censure on the Opposition. So we have got to this—that a declaration against a general tariff and taxation of food is a vote of censure on the Opposition. Now, at any rate, we have got the view of the right hon. Gentleman as to the position of affairs, but that is all we have had.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: And the questions.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: The right hon. Gentleman, it is perfectly true, put a series of questions, and some of them were answered by the Prime Minister—[Opposition cries of "Which?"]—and some of them I propose to answer before I sit down. At any rate the right hon. Gentleman has not yet given his view. He has performed the greatest of all dialectical feats. He has gone through two elections, in the course of which he made a considerable number of speeches, and tariff reform, according to his right hon. colleague, was the chief issue of the election. He has performed all that without giving the slightest indication to the House or to the country what his views really are on this question. [An HON. MEMBER on the LABOUR Benches: That is clever.] I do not think that anyone will deny the right hon. Gentleman's ingenuity; but I do not know whether he is in favour of a tax on food or whether he favours a general tariff. He says that he could not oppose either a tax on food or a general tariff on principle, but they are not popular. The right hon. Gentleman says that he is not opposed to a tax on food on principle or to a general tariff on principle. But he believed the principle was not popular, and therefore he was against it.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: No.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: I have done what the right hon. Gentleman has evidently not done—I have read all his speeches. What the right hon. Gentleman said was this—

> "At the present moment a tax on food, for various reasons, is unpopular, and therefore, I am against it."

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I said that at Sheffield.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: At Sheffield! Yes, that came from Sheffield. The right hon. Gentleman says that at the present moment a tax on food is for various reasons unpopular, but that if the conscience, intellect, and conviction of the nation ever demands a tax on food then he would vote for it. This is another way of saying that if it were not unpopular he would vote for it. [An HON MEMBER on the OPPOSITION Benches: When it becomes necessary.] That is the same thing. The only statistics that will influence the right hon. Gentleman are the statistics of the division lobby. But we are entitled to know what the view of the Opposition is. Is the Amendment that they have put down the official Amendment? If there is any scheme to protect British industries against illegitimate competition without raising the price of raw material or of food we should all vote for it; but we want to know what is that scheme, where is it? The right hon. Gentleman has at any rate said that this fiscal reform question is the first great constructive measure which the Unionist Party will devote themselves to. What is the scheme; what is the proposal? The right hon. Gentleman said there was obscurity in the Motion on the Paper. Where is the obscurity? I should have thought that the Motion of my hon. friend was perfectly clear in its declaration of the policy of the Government and of those who support them. He says that he is against a tax on food, and against a general tariff, and then the right hon. Gentleman asks why not introduce the words, "or otherwise"? Because these are the only proposals made up to the present moment. What other proposal has he got?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The right hon. Gentleman forgets that he is in office. He asks me whether any other proposals have been made. I say emphatically they have—bounties, for instance.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: By whom? By what responsible person are they suggested? The only suggestion made is a vague and nebulous one by the right hon. Gentleman himself in favour of what he calls retaliation. How does he propose to interpret that without a general tariff and taxation of food? These are the only proposals, and I think his right hon. colleague told him over and over again, though the right hon. Gentleman has not learnt the lesson yet. The right hon Member for West Birmingham even wrote a letter to Lord Ridley a few weeks ago to tell the right hon. Gentleman that nothing would be of any good without either a general tariff or a tax on food. The right hon. Gentleman said so at Bristol, and, though he may have forgotten speeches made fifteen years ago, he surely cannot forget speeches made by himself a few months ago. The conclusion come to by the right hon. Gentleman, therefore, was that nothing would avail except a general tariff and a tax on food. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham and we are absolutely agreed that no protection will be of the slightest use to our industries unless there is both taxation of food and a general tariff. Then I ask the Prime Minister [loud laughter]—force of habit, I am sorry to say, of course I mean the Leader of the Opposition—does he take that view? The Motion is as clear as words can make it, and condemns protection by a general tariff and by taxes on food.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: And not on other things.

Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE: We are condemning the scheme put forward at the last general election by the Opposition. I am not sorry there has been a discussion upon this subject.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: Hear, hear!

Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE: If the right hon. Gentleman agrees with us on these two points he will help us perhaps in the division lobby. I am, as I said, not sorry that there has been a discussion on this subject, because it shows that even in this Parliament the Opposition are not prepared to suggest any definite and clear scheme. They did not do it when they constituted a Government; they are not prepared to suggest an alternative now. That proves exactly what every defender of free trade has always stated, that the moment you begin to put protection into the shape of a definite, concrete scheme it must necessarily break down. It is all very well to say foreign tariffs are damaging our trade. What is your remedy? It is you who raised the question. What is your definite scheme? The right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham raised this issue, and declared that that was the issue on which the election would be fought. It was largely fought on that issue; and we are entitled to ask the House of Commons, on the first opportunity it has had since the general election, to record its conviction that a proposal of that character is injurious to the interests of British trade. The hon. Member sitting below the gangway opposite in a very eloquent speech declared that, although he was a free-trader, he did not think free trade sufficiently dealt with all the evils of our social system. I do not believe any Member sitting on this side believes that either. But we do say that free trade as a fiscal system is infinitely better than protection for the purpose of creating and accumulating wealth in the country. Distribution is a totally different matter. The hon. Member went on to schedule a number of reforms which he should like to see introduced. Some of them I agree with. Such questions as railway rates, the taxation of ground rents and values, land reform, mining royalties—all these have been put forward by hon. Members now sitting on this side for many years, and I hope before this Parliament separates that they will be dealt with and very effectively. The hon. Member, however, further said that, after sixty years of free trade, the working classes were no better off.

Mr. SNOWDEN said he was prepared to admit there had been improvement; but still free trade had only slightly touched or modified many social evils which existed in the protection period.

Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE: At any rate, before you change a great system which has been in operation for sixty years, which the trade of the countryhas adapted itself to, you ought to give overwhelming reasons for the change. Exactly the same thing applies to a protective system. There are industries which are based upon it; and you cannot change a protective into a free trade system without damaging those industries which are based upon protection and protection alone. So, in connection with free trade, the great industries which are dependent upon cheap material, and upon cheap half-manufactured goods, imported from foreign countries, would undoubtedly suffer, and very severely, if you changed your free-trade system, which gives cheap material for those manufactures, for a protective system, which would increase the price. Our two great manufacturing rivals are Germany and the United States of America; we send more manufactures to the world's neutral market than both of them put together. We leave Germany, this dangerous competitor, about 100 millions behind. The right hon. Member for West Birmingham seems to doubt that——

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: No, I did not.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: But is not that a very important fact? Here you have two great protective countries, one of them with double our population, the other with a population greater by 17,000,000 than ours, and still we export more manufactured goods to neutral markets than both of them put together. I think we are entitled to say that that has grown up under a free-trade system, it is due to cheap material, it is due to the cheap half-manufactured articles. Why, after all, do foreign countries buy from one country more than from another? Take China, or the Argentine Republic. In China we sell more manufactured goods than the United States, Germany, France, and Russia put together. In fact, our sale of goods to China is greater than that of the whole of Europe put together. Why, what advantage have you got if you get a preference, that which is suggested by the right hon. Member for West Birmingham? We go there on equal terms; so we do to the Argentine Republic, and so we do to all neutral markets. Why then do we sell more goods than all these great manufacturing countries put together?

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: I would ask the right hon. Gentleman why it has happened that in the last thirty years the proportion which we sell to these neutral countries has become so much less [MINISTERIAL ironical cries of "Oh oh!"]—in proportion to the sales from protected countries.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: The right hon. Gentleman had really better give up statistics.

MR. CHAMBERLAIN: I dare say you think so.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: I am very glad to see he has started to withdraw some of them; the worst of it is that he withdraws the statistics, but never the deductions. So far from the proportions getting less, as a matter of fact we are increasing our exports to these neutral markets in a greater proportion than any other foreign country. Why, the increase in our exports to China is greater than the increase in the trade of Germany, of the United States, and of France put together. Really, the right hon. Gentleman had better take his statistics from the source whence he got them when a free-trader. Why do they buy? It is not because the Chinese prefer Britishers to Frenchmen and Germans.

SIR HOWARD VINCENT: Yes, they do.

MR. CROOKS: Is that the reason the Rand mine owners like the Chinese?

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: That bias has very little to do with purchase. I do not know whether the right hon. Gentleman has ever observed how very little the bias of a country influences the sales to that country. We have quarrelled—at least the right hon. Gentleman has—with most of the countries of Europe, with Russia, with France, he tried to pick a quarrel with Germany—[OPPOSITION cries of "Oh" and "When?"]—my hon. friend has forgotten the "mend your manners" speech. At that time there was considerable ill-feeling between the countries—here, and in France possibly, and in Germany. But if anyone studied the Board of Trade Returns of exports and imports he would find that the business transactions between those countries were not influenced in the slightest degree. It is not a thing that influences trade. Countries buy from one country in preference to another either because they get the same quality of goods at a cheaper price, or because they get a better quality of goods at the same price, or they are influenced by the current of trade and by accessibility. Now Germany has the advantage over us in European markets as far as accessibility and propinquity are concerned. She can send her trucks to almost any of the European countries without any change at all. But take the great markets of the world, the three dominant considerations which influence trade—cheapness, quality at the same price, current of trade—are all in favour of the free trade country against the protectionist. The result is that, as long as we maintain our system of free imports, not only are we holding our own in all the neutral markets of the world, but we are beating all our competitors by an increased difference. Has the right hon. Gentleman really followed the statistics with regard to our trade in South America and in China? I could give statistics to the right hon. Gentleman which show that we are enormously increasing our trade in those countries, but I have only a limited time at my disposal. [Cries of "Give them."]

Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN: Let us have the figures.

Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE: I will give the figures.

Mr. CROOKS: Are they facts or illustrations?

Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE: The right hon. Gentleman wants figures. I will give him reliable figures. Take China. The value of the total exports of domestic produce from Germany in 1904——

Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN: Oh

Mr. Lloyd-George.

Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE: If the right hon. Gentleman can restrain himself—I am quoting 1904 because it is the last complete figure for Germany. If I take 1905 the disparity will be still greater, so I am taking a more favourable year to the right hon. Gentleman. In 1904 the total exports from Germany to China were £3,380,000, from France £316,000, from the United States £4,834,000, and from the United Kingdom £13,146,000, and this ran up during the last year to £17,000,000. I will take the Argentine Republic. Germany has made a special study of the Argentine Republic, and has made special efforts to capture the trade of that Republic. She does things which we would not dream of doing. She sends out commercial travellers. When I was in the Argentine Republic the general complaint was, "We get German commercial travellers everywhere, and they ask us what we want. You Britishers don't take the least trouble to reach us. 'Here are our goods,' you say: 'take them or leave them, as you like.'" And they do take them. Well Germany has run up her trade there to £5,134,000, France £2,900,000, the United States of America £3,500,000, and in 1904 we ran up to nearly £11,000,000. What about the increase? And here comes the proportion. I am taking a ten years period. In 1895 we only sold £5,000,000 to the Argentine Republic. In 1904 we leapt up to £11,000,000—an increase of £6,000,000. No other country can show the same increase. That is the test of free trade in comparison with protection. Your tariff does not help you. Your tariff may protect your own particular market—no one denies that—but when you go outside and face your competitors armed with tariffs up to the teeth, scientific tariffs, too, more scientific than anything that has yet been suggested in this House, we beat them all without the slightest difficulty. Why? Simply because our system of free imports enables us to get the cheapest and best materials. Germany is our most formidable competitor, not because she is a greater manufacturing nation — the greatest manufacturing nation in the world is the United States of America—but, in order to compete with us, in order to be able to make up for the dearest material, Germany has to reduce wages. The United States tries both high tariffs and high wages, with the result that she is no competitor, practically, of ours in the neutral markets of the world. She produces twice as much as we do in the way of manufactures, and yet she sells to the world less than half of the manufactures that we do. Why? Because she is trying dear material and dear labour. Germany sees that, in order to compete with us, she must be able to put an article on the market at something approximating the same price, and so she makes up for dear materials by cheap labour. That is why we are able to beat them. The third consideration which influences trade is the current of trade. After all, you buy from a country, and that country buys from you. It is just like a market town. The farmers come in to sell, but they remain to buy. The same thing applies to countries. All that is in our favour as a great free-trade country. Now this is what I want to ask the right hon. Gentleman opposite. Take our great manufacturing industries, our textile industries, our engineering trades, our shipping—which is never mentioned. Everything else is mentioned, even pearl buttons, but shipping! *de minimis non.* The greatest mercantile marine the world ever saw never finds a place in a tariff reform pamphlet. How is it that we have succeeded in all these great industries? Purely because we have cheaper material, which enables us to pay higher wages, to give shorter hours, and at the same time to put our commodities on the market at a cheaper price than protectionist countries. That is the advantage we have. Now supposing we put on a tariff of 10 per cent. A 10 per cent. tariff at least means 7 per cent. put on to the cost of your material, of your food, and of your clothing. Does any one doubt that that is the inevitable effect of a purely protectionist tariff? It has been the effect of it. We are told about Germany. Do hon. Gentlemen know that during last year there were a considerable number of failures in the iron trade, and that they were all attributed to the effect of the dearness of material? Now, supposing you had a protectionist tariff in this country of 10 per cent. It would increase the price of material. The right hon. Gentleman says, "Oh, but you would increase your wages." Very well, let us look at that sum as a means of enabling us to compete in neutral markets. You put the increased price on to your material. To begin with, in order to enable your workman to get the same advantage from his wages you must increase them by at least 5 or 6 or 7 per cent. If you increased them to that extent he would receive only the same under the protectionist as he was receiving under a free trade system. By what margin can we maintain our trade in neutral markets? It is not by a margin of 12 per cent. that we are able to hold our own. It is very often by a much narrower margin; and the result will be that we shall destroy a very considerable portion of our trade in these neutral markets by the simple process of increasing the cost of production. Now the cheapness of our production enables us to capture trade. The hon. Member for Blackburn referred to the improved condition of the working classes under free trade. Well, now, I should like to give a few figures. I agree with him that if free trade simply increases our production and our imports and exports and does not bring any benefit to the workmen of this country it is not a system which is worthy of acceptance. But I think that is not giving free trade the credit which is its due. I will compare the condition of workmen twenty years ago with their condition now. I take the centres of quinquennial periods, for it is the only way of really getting a fair test. For every 87s. a workman earned then he earns 100s. now at the same job. That is an increase of 15 per cent. in his wages. Now let me take the purchasing value of his wage. Food, which cost 137s. then, costs 100s. now. That is a decrease of 40 per cent. in the price of food and an increase of 15 per cent. in wages. Surely that is a very great improvement in the condition of the working man.

Mr. RAMSAY MACDONALD (Leicester): What about rent?

Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE: I am coming to the rent. When you come to the clothing you find that there is not quite the same improvement. There is a reduction from 110 to 100, but when you come to the urban rents you find that they have gone up. Well, here is a direction in which the right hon. Member for West Birmingham might be able to do something for the workman. Let him grant taxation of ground values and ground-rents. Let him do something to let the workman get his cottage cheaper than he does now. During the last five years the price of food has gone up. There was a constant decline down to the year 1900, but in that year prices went up. To what was that attributable ? To the taxation brought about by the war. That ought to have been an argument for taking taxation off food. With regard to unemployment, the fluctuations are considerably less in each successive cycle of trade. This shows that we are getting unemployment within the compass when it can be the more readily dealt with. But that is not the case in any protectionist country. The fluctuations are greater and the depressions more considerable in Germany, France, and the United States. Taking all these tests the House must come to the conclusion that free trade has succeeded. The right hon. Gentleman still believes in a tax on corn. The only industry which has been at all affected disastrously by free imports is agriculture.

*MR. WILLIAM RUTHERFORD (Liverpool, West Derby) : Slates.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE : I know more about slates than the hon. Member. I represent a constituency that lives on slates, and the electors of that constituency returned me as a free importer. Agriculture is the only industry that may have been injuriously affected. But under free trade there is always a tendency to an increase in the number of those employed in the best-paid trades. In the highly paid trades of engineering, shipbuilding, building, mining, and furniture-making there has been an increase out of all proportion to the increase of population. That is the natural tendency where you have free imports of half-manufactured goods. I was asked the other day why the flax industry had been destroyed in Yorkshire. Because it was a trade that paid low rates of wages, and as the woollen trade prospered men rushed from the trade which paid low wages to that which paid higher wages. Is a 2s. duty on foreign corn going to restore agriculture ? Even if half the duty went into the pockets of agriculturists, it would mean only about £3,000,000. Is £3,000,000 going to save our agriculture ? The right hon. Member for West Birmingham once held the office which I now hold. Then he had reliable information supplied him by some of the best and ablest civil servants the State ever had. Now, the right hon. Gentleman receives random conjectures from any one who likes to fire these things at him, and that has made him a tariff reformer. He then pleaded for great social reforms ; he then realised that there was a good deal to be done. I agree with the hon. Member opposite in that. There is a good deal to be done. The right hon. Member for West Birmingham thought so then ; he thinks so now. But I venture to say that the methods he is now adopting are methods which will aggravate these evils and not remedy them, and if it is not too late I appeal to him to return to his earlier and better mind on these subjects.

*SIR EDWARD CLARKE (City of London) : I do not rise to reply to the speech which has just been made, but I hope that the House will allow me to make my contribution to the debate from a somewhat different standpoint from that of the preceding speakers. I recognise that this debate is probably the only opportunity we shall have for some time of dealing with this large question of fiscal policy, and I am by no means sorry that this opportunity has been given to us for dealing with this matter frankly and fairly. It is the only opportunity we shall have for some time of discussing the matter, because the policy of the Government, naturally, will not relate to the policy which has been advocated by those who sit on the Opposition side of the House, and the Opposition will not have the opportunity for some years of making proposals. As to the policy of the late Government there was no doubt; that policy I heartily supported and upon it I based my candidature for this House. I look back upon the history of this controversy, and I want to see where the Tory Party stand with regard to this question. When this controversy began, it was practically opened, as far as the responsible Government was concerned, by the speech of my right hon. friend and colleague the Member for the City of London, who said at Sheffield on the October 1st, 1903:—

> "Two other questions, and only two others, have to be asked. Will the remedy you propose be complete? To that I answer that it will not be complete even if it can be tried in its integrity, because I believe the country will not tolerate a tax on food."

The policy then declared was the policy of freedom to negotiate, and if necessary to retaliate against hostile tariffs. Exactly a year later, at Edinburgh, my right hon. friend declared that he stood by the Sheffield programme, and said—

> "I have seen nothing to alter in what is now known, in the technical language of public controversy, as the Sheffield programme. The fiscal policy that I recommended at Sheffield is not a compromise and is not a half-way house. It is a logical, self-contained whole, defensible in itself."

Between the dates of the speeches to which I have just referred an important and formal declaration was made on behalf of the Government. In February, 1904, my right hon. friend the Member for the St. Augustine's Division of Kent said when my right hon. friend the late Prime Minister was absent through illness—

> "I should like to state again, to my hon. friends especially, what is the policy, as I define it, laid down by the Prime Minister. I will state it in the fewest and clearest words I can use. The principles of policy are—that the Government, when conducting negotiations with foreign Powers, should have the power, when necessary, to threaten retaliation, and when the threat is insufficient, they should have power to carry it out. The Government have no intention of taxing raw material, and their policy does not include the taxation of food. Neither do the Government propose the imposition of any taxation for the purpose of fostering a home industry which is subjected only to natural and legitimate competition."

It was observed in the House that the statement made was that the Government programme did not include the taxation of food, and thereupon Sir Sir John Stirling Maxwell asked—

> "Is the Government opposed to the taxation of food as proposed by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham? I understand that proposal is not part of the Government's policy, but I beg to ask whether the Government is or is not opposed to that proposal?"

Thereupon my right hon. friend the Member for the St. Augustine's Division of Kent said—

> "I have said that the Government are opposed to any duty on raw material or food."

That was definite and clear enough; but if there had been any doubt as to its authoritative character that doubt was soon removed. Lord Lansdowne, in the House of Lords, on February, 19th 1904, also made a clear, authoritative, and explicit declaration of the policy of the Government. He said—

> "I am afraid it would be absolutely impossible for me to say anything more distinct than that I accept Mr. Akers Douglas's statement, to which the noble and learned Lord drew my attention, and I may say that we, as a Government, and we cannot speak except as a Government, are opposed to a duty on raw materials or food stuffs. Why is it that we are told that our policy leads inevitably down an inclined plane to the Birmingham abyss? I say, on the contrary, our policy is a self-contained policy. It is quite within our power to stop short at it. It is a policy which is intelligible without the assumption that it involves anything that it does not already comprise. And I may say more; I say not only is it a self-contained policy, but I believe that instead of leading to Birmingham, it leads, if anything, in the opposite direction."

That policy was never withdrawn or qualified in the least during the existence of the Government. It was the policy of the Unionist Government up to the very last day they held office. In that policy I believe, that policy I support, that policy I have advocated on platforms in the country, and by that policy I stand. But at that time there had been going on the advocacy of an unauthorised programme. It was advocated with great energy and courage and resource by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham, and he was supported very vigorously and generously by persons of large means who were interested in the increase of their commercial prosperity, and who lent themselves to the advocacy of that programme, but that policy was never accepted by the Government. It never became the official policy of the Party, nor is it now. [Cries of "Yes" and "No."] As the general election drew near the then Prime Minister became very uneasy. Formidable differences were developing in his Party, and creating great difficulties in the selection of candidates and the arrangements for the contest, and at Newcastle on November 14th, 1905, he made a most urgent appeal to his Party to forget the differences which were outside the practical politics of the hour and to associate themselves in the common support of a policy which all could accept. My right hon. friend added—

> "If you reject my advice, disaster will certainly overtake your cause, as it overtakes every cause whose supporters are not at one with each other."

That emphatic appeal of the Leader of the Party met with no success at all. Cold and critical articles appeared in the principal London papers which were supposed to be supporting the Government. A Resolution was carried at the Newcastle conference not easily reconcilable with what the Prime Minister had said. A speech at Birmingham did not help the situation. Shortly afterwards, at the end of the first week in December, the Prime Minister found that the position was impossible. He resigned office. At Leeds, after he had ceased for ten days to be Prime Minister, he made his final appeal to his followers. He said—

> "Protection may be right or it may be wrong. I belong to the section of our Party which is free trade and not protection."

He went on to say—

> "We have no general tariff at the present time, and if a general tariff is to be constructed upon protective lines, then, as I have already told you, that seems to me to be outside the scope of the fiscal reforms which I am proposing to my countrymen for their acceptance. You do not require a general tariff, protective or non-protective, to deal with this question."

That was the last word of the late Prime Minister before we went to the general election, and we took the verdict of the country upon that. The opinion the late Prime Minister had expressed as to the fate that would befall the Party was absolutely justified; the warning he had given to his followers in the most definite terms again and again that the country would not submit to a tax on food was proved to be absolutely true. No doubt many votes were obtained upon education and upon Chinese labour, but, although there were strong currents of popular feeling against the Party that would probably have led to their defeat apart from this question, still what turned that defeat into an absolute and irretrievable disaster was this lamentable advocacy of a tax on food. In many constituencies—I spoke in many and I know exactly what happened—the Unionist candidates, as the polling day came near, had to put out posters "Vote for —— and no tax on food." The misfortune was that the very form of the disavowal reminded the voters that the question of the taxation of food was a living and real issue in the election, and I am not surprised that they preferred to vote for people whom they believed to be definitely, and as a Party, pledged against a tax upon food rather than for those who, while they disavowed it themselves, were associated with others who were making a tax on food a part of their programme. This pressure, I think, was felt in somewhat unexpected quarters. The late Chancellor of the Exchequer must have felt the pressure a little. On the 3rd of November, 1906, at Stirchley the right hon. Gentleman the Member for East Worcestershire said—

> "When we mention preference we are met with the old cry of the big and little loaf. That has absolutely no connection with the question before the nation. I could conceive of a very considerable preference being given to the colonies in wines and spirits, meat, dairy produce, market garden produce, and various articles other than corn which might be an advantage not only to our Colonies but to many of the smaller cultivators and workers on the land of this country."

But that did not go far enough, for on the 18th of November, 1905, at Catshill, the ex-Chancellor of the Exchequer said—

> "He thought it would be possible to construct a preferential system without placing any tax on food."

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN (Worcestershire, E.): This is an unusual proceeding, and I regret that my intervention should be necessary. I should have thought that my hon. and learned friend would have communicated to me his intention to refer to my speeches. My hon. and learned friend has accurately quoted part of what I said, but if he had told the whole truth to the House ["Oh!"] he would have added that in every speech on the subject to the electors I defended the tax on foreign corn to secure a preferential arrangement with the colonies. I said, in the terms my hon. and learned friend has quoted, that I could conceive that considerable preference could be given without putting a tax on corn, but I believe that in every speech I made I definitely announced, as I did in my address, that I was prepared to vote for a tax on foreign corn, and my constituents returned me with full knowledge of my views.

*SIR EDWARD CLARKE: I am very sorry, and offer the fullest apology to my right hon. friend for not having mentioned the fact to him, but at the same time I may mention that I made the quotation some time ago, and the words were accurately quoted; the only point was that my right hon. friend, while supporting the tax on food, did at the same time suggest that it was not essential to colonial preference. Many of my friends found before coming to the end of the election that it was impossible to maintain the tax on food, and so this part of the cargo was thrown over to save the ship, and in too many cases both cargo and ship were lost. The returns at the election were in my belief a deliberate, emphatic, and final decision against a tax on corn and meat. It is useless to suggest to poor people a tax on corn and meat and to explain to them that the taxes on tea and sugar will be reduced. They regard those taxes as war taxes, and they are looking forward to relief from them. It is impossible to argue in that way with the poor people to whom appeal has to be made. The canvasser says to the agricultural labourer, "This new tax that we are going to put on will cost you sixteen and a half farthings a week, but if we take off all these other taxes, you will be relieved of seventeen farthings a week, so that you will really have the benefit of half a farthing a week." He says to the artisan, "The cost of this tax will be nineteen farthings a week, but you will save nineteen and a half farthings a week, and so there will be a clear gain." It is not much use addressing that sort of thing to poor men. We are told that—

> "High heaven rejects the lore
> Of nicely calculated less and more."

and the working men of the country took the same view. There is this further point that the man to whom this is said is expecting that the taxes on tea and sugar will be taken off. He is looking forward to this relief. Do you expect him to listen with contentment or even with patience when you tell him that the taking off of those taxes will bring him no advantage because you are going to put taxes on corn and meat which will leave him no richer for the whole transaction. Sir, this unshakeable resistance was clearly foreseen by my right hon. friend. He warned his Party that these taxes on food were so closely associated with the bitter controversies of 1846 that their renewal would be of infinite danger to the Unionist Party. He was quite right in thinking that there was an ingrained prejudice against these taxes. In my own belief it is not a prejudice, it is not a superstition; it is an expression of a fixed and reasonable belief that by putting these taxes on corn and meat you will be making the poverty of the country pay for the increased prosperity of the most prosperous class. While I do not mind ducal landlords looking forward to increased rents and great manufacturers looking forward to an extension of their business, I do not want the poorer people of the country to pay for them. In dealing sometimes with these questions as they affect the living of the poorer classes or the middle classes, when those interests are urged they are sneered at as "bread and butter politics." But in considering these questions in the aspect of increased rents and the growth of industrial undertakings, we are told it is "Imperial expansion." I differ from my right hon. friend in this way. My right hon. friend looks upon this matter as a question of expediency merely. I look upon it as a question of principle. I am going to ask the indulgence of the House to allow me to make make a quotation from a speech of my own. Sometimes an opinion is as important in relation to the time at which it was spoken as it is in itself. On November 13th, 1903, in a speech delivered at Brighton I said—

> "As to the first of the two fiscal questions, I am heartily with Mr. Balfour and the Government in the declaration they have made, that in future we are not to be bound hand and foot by the rule that tariffs shall only be imposed for purposes of revenue, but that we are also entitled to handle tariffs and deal with them for the purpose of securing fair treatment for our trade in other lands. But when I pass to the second part of the question (the other fiscal question) a very serious difference comes into view. There is a difference, not in degree, but in substance and in character, between a tax upon foreign manufactured articles and a tax upon food. A tax upon foreign manufactured articles is to a great extent a voluntary income tax. The consumer here, who finds that by the imposition of a tax the price of the foreign manufactured article was raised, would consider whether he would spend a larger sum

upon that article or whether he would be content with some cheaper substitute which the industry of his own country could provide for him. A tax upon manufactured articles is also a tax which falls upon people in exact proportion to their wealth. The richer people pay it, and pay it without trouble; the poorer people don't pay it at all, for to a great extent the poorer classes of this country do not employ and do not use manufactured articles from abroad, and if they do they will be able to find an economical substitute in the products of our own labour. But the moment you turn to articles of food the rule is entirely changed. The poorer a man is the larger the proportion of his income he is obliged to spend upon articles of food, and the consequence is—and this should never be forgotten in discussing a question of this kind—that whereas a tax on food would fall very lightly upon the people who are well to do, exactly as you go down the scale towards the point where poverty steps in, the heavier the burden of a tax upon food becomes. But now there are two more observations which I want to make upon this. If there is to be a tax upon food at all, there is no intelligible reason in not putting a tax upon every article of food. If, as has been said, the producer who sends the food here will have to pay the tax, then you may as well put it upon everything; for the more he pays the better. If he does not pay the tax, there is no difference in principle whatever between one article of food and another. But there is another observation I should like to place before you, and it is this. If a tax is to be put upon articles of food, there is no intelligible reason why it should not be put upon the raw material of manufacture as well. Again, if the tax is to be paid by the foreigner, it does not matter. You may just as well say let him pay the tax upon raw material as well as upon food. If it is to be paid by the people of this country, your food is the most important raw material you have got, and there is no intelligible reason that I have ever heard stated by anybody that will justify the taxation of food, and at the same time exclude the taxation of raw material. Just one word more which cannot be challenged. If you are going to deal with your colonies so as to give equal advantage to all your colonies, you must tax raw material as well as food. If some of your colonies send you food and some send you raw material, and if you are going to give advantage to all, it will be necessary to equalise the taxes all round. I say, that I do not accept, and I cannot accept, the proposals to put taxes on the food of the people."

That was a declaration made during the existence of the late Government, and it was a declaration by which I stand at the present time. Other questions have been raised. I do not stop at this time to discuss the question of retaliation, or of a general tariff. With regard to retaliation, in the sentences I have just read I expressed my entire concurrence with my Leader in the proposals he had made. I do not believe there is any real and serious difference between the two sides of the House on that subject. When this matter of retaliation was mentioned my right hon. friend the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster discussed it in a speech at Wolverhampton on the 15th of November, 1905, and he stated three conditions on which he would not be indisposed to consider it. The right hon. Gentleman said—

> "Whatever views others might take of the retaliation question we ought, before consenting to anything of the kind, to be satisfied, first, that there was a reasonable prospect of its being effective for its purpose; secondly, that it would not injure other branches of trade requiring raw materials; and, thirdly, that specific retaliatory duties must be subject to the assent of the House of Commons."

These three conditions are perfectly acceptable to anybody. No one would suggest a tax which was not reasonably likely to be effective or would injure other industries, and the idea that the House of Commons would ever delegate to a Committee, or to any Government in power, the imposing of duties without the consent of the House is one which has never entered anyone's mind. My right hon. friend the Secretary of State for India on another occasion said—

> "If a foreign country set up a tariff against the manufacturers of this country he was not at all averse to accept for a time the doctrine of 'an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.' Yes; but he wanted to be quite sure that it was not his own eye."

That is the *lex talionis* in its oldest and simplest form. I think it will be found hereafter that things are obsecured and discussion rendered sometimes almost meaningless by the use of terms which have half a dozen interpretations. "Protection" is one of them, and "Free Trade" another. It may not come at present, but I believe that this country will yet know how to protect itself, and that the judgment of the country will approve of steps being taken in order to make other nations understand that they cannot run to all the lengths they choose in invading and crippling our markets by putting on taxes against our goods while we leave our ports open to them. As to the general tariff which people interpret in many different ways, I understand it to be a list of a large number of articles, each with its own special duty of from 5 up to 35 per cent., so as to meet competition of manufactured articles from abroad. To such a general tariff I am absolutely opposed. I can hardly imagine a Government setting to work to deal with such a tariff; and the extent to which influences—I will not say corruption, but very unpleasant influences—will be brought to bear on the Government is a thing which will bring into our commercial system evils from which we are at this moment free.

On this matter we have had an overwhelming defeat, and the question, to my mind, now is, "What is the proper line for the Tory Party to take?" I wish to say to my friends who believe in such a policy that not only will it exclude them from office for many years; but if they adhere to it, it may imperil things which are more important than any tariff question, because they can put a tax on corn and take that tax off, but when institutions of the country are broken up they cannot be re-made. If the Church be once over-thrown or our system of religious education be destroyed it cannot be set up again, and the evil done will never be redressed. At all events it will involve a very long and embittered contest. Then look at the question of Home Rule. Declarations have been made by the most important members of the present Government—declarations honestly made, and which I believe will be honestly observed—that in the present Parliament no proposals will be made to set up a Parliament in Dublin with an Executive responsible to it; but if some years hence we go to a general election with, on the one side a Party proposing a policy of Home Rule, and on the other side a Party proposing to impose taxes on corn and meat, I believe that the people of this country will rather accept the political risks of Home Rule than submit to these odious taxes. In 1852 there was an appeal to the constituencies, which was the last election in this country which turned on the matter of a tax on corn. The Ministers were defeated, and Mr. Disraeli and Lord Derby made statements in Parliament in regard to the decisive results of that election. Mr. Disraeli said—

> "With the consent and the concurrence, not only of the House but of the whole country, it was determined that the question of protection should be left to the decision of the country to be declared by a general election. The verdict of the country has been of an unmistakable character. We have bowed to that unequivocal declaration . . . . We were of opinion that no opposition should be made if some resolution was brought forward which was in its character quite unequivocal as to the fact that the country had decided in favour of the system of free trade, and that it was the duty of the Government hereafter to adhere to the principle of unrestricted competition in their financial and commercial legislation."

The language which Lord Derby used was perhaps stronger. He said—

> "The country, by a very large and undoubted majority, including a very considerable number of the representatives of the agricultural districts themselves, has declared that whether it might have been desirable or not as matter of policy, yet that in the present state of affairs they are determined not to depart from that system of legislation which has been established—that the country will not agree to the imposition of any tax on the introduction of articles of provisions."

And there was an interesting passage a little later on in the same speech—

> "If I understand," said Lord Derby, "the meaning of the expression free trade, it is that you will not impose taxes for the purpose of protecting individuals or local interests, but that you would impose them for the purposes of revenue, and of revenue only; and that in the

imposition of those taxes you will have especial regard to lightening the burdens which may be imposed on those articles which mainly enter into the consumption of the great mass of the community. . . . On the part, then, of myself and of my colleagues, I bow to the decision of the country; and having so bowed I declare, on their part and on my own, that while desirous of mitigating to the utmost of our power that unavoidable injury which the adoption of that policy has inflicted and must inflict on important classes, I do not adopt it with any reserve whatever. I adopt it frankly as the decision of the country, and I am prepared honestly and fairly to carry it out as a Minister of the Crown."

Those were the declarations made in 1852, and from then till now the policy of the Tory Party has been that which was then declared by Mr. Disraeli and Lord Derby. These are not obsolete shibboleths or discredited declarations. They are the declarations of the leaders of the Tory Party which have been acted upon during the past half century by the leaders of the Party. For fifty years they have represented the unquestioned creed of the Tory Party. Through the thirty years of Mr. Disraeli's leadership in our councils, through the fifteen years of Lord Salisbury, through the ten years of my right hon. friend, they have been the creed of our Party, and I stand firm to that creed to-day. The cry of the big and the little loaf had almost died out in the country. It had for years been scarcely heard except in some country constituency where probably the name of the candidate revived old antagonisms. Now that ill-omened spectre has been summoned from its grave, and I believe that a generation may pass before it will be laid to rest again. At any rate, there are some of us who will stand firm in the creed which has for so long been the creed of the Tory Party, and will resist now, and at any time, any proposal to put a tax on the corn or meat of the people, unless, indeed, in circumstances of so terrible a national necessity that we are compelled to sacrifices of the bitterest and deepest kind. But as a matter of administration and taxation, there are a good many of us who will never be parties to its introduction into our financial system. I hope—it is almost hoping against hope, but I do still hope—there may be found amongst those who have served in the ranks of the Tory Party for many years past many who respect the decision that has been come to by their greatest leaders and are prepared to stand by the policy which seemed to them good for the country. I do hope that the Tory Party will regain its influence, for I believe its principles are an important and even essential part of our national life. And I trust our leaders will recognise that when we are anxious to extend the area of our trade and gain for ourselves Imperial renown, we must never forget that the first duty of a statesman is to the poorest of the people, and that to every statesman worthy of the name the welfare of the people is the highest law.

*MR. BRACE (Glamorganshire, S.) said he was not surprised at the manœuvres that had been made to prevent the discussion of the issue of whether our system was really a free trade one; but he did not intend to take up the time of the House in debating whether it was one of free trade or of free imports. The mere matter of name was of no account, as the merits of the question constituted the touchstone. He stood there as the representative of a great organisation whose desires he wished to convey to this House, although he had no special interest to preserve or protect. It was because he was convinced that neither protection nor retaliation could touch the great economic questions which were now involved that he stood up as an opponent of those proposals. It had been stated by the hon. Gentleman who last addressed the House that, after all, the great question which must be considered was the comfort and *status* of the people of a country, and that whatever other factors might be taken into account, the question of the cost of food was the prime factor to be considered by the Government of the country. The Board of Trade returns for 1902, 1903, 1904, and 1905, showed the wonderful advantage which this country enjoyed over all other countries. Did it not show that there was some sound fundamental case for our system when a corner in wheat never seriously increased the price of food in these islands? Our system protected us by making the world our granary, and that enabled us to give our people cheap food. In 1902, according to the Board of Trade Returns, the wheat imports into the United Kingdom in millions of hundredweights were: From the United States of America 43·3; Argentina 4·3; Canada 9·5; Russia 6·5; Australia 4·2; and India 8·8; altogether the total from the above and all other places was 81·0 per cent. In 1903 the imports were: United States 24·2; Argentina 14·1; Canada 10·8; Russia 17·2; Australia *nil*; and India 17·1, a total of 88·1 per cent. from the above and all other places. In 1904 the imports were: From the United States 7·1; Argentina 21·4; Canada 6·2; Russia 23·5; Australia 10·3; India 25·5, the total from all sources being 97·8. In 1905 the similar figures were: United States 6; Argentina 23·2; Canada 6·5; Russia 24·7; Australia 10·1; India 22·8; a total of 97·6. It had been asked whether our Colonies could not produce sufficient wheat to supply us, but these figures showed that instead of Canada, at all events, being able to send us more wheat she had been sending us less. He was quite aware that the proposers of the system of tariffs thought that in the event of the failure of a harvest or the establishment of a speculative corner, they could withdraw the tariff barriers, but what advantage would it be for us to withdraw the tariff barriers, when we ourselves had discouraged corn growing in the countries upon which we were dependent for a supply of wheat? Immediately the English agriculturists found that they could not grow corn at a profit they devoted a large amount of their resources to stock growing. Would not the United States of America, Argentine Republic and Russia, if their corn was shut out by a tariff wall, do the same? He said that it would be tempting Providence if this House were to depart from the present fiscal system of the country and not allow us to make the world our granary, as it was at the present time. They heard a good deal about "dumping" but we were the greatest "dumpers" in the world, as we insisted upon sending our products into every other kingdom. Of the South Wales coal trade, which he represented, nearly 80 per cent. of its output was "dumped" into other countries, not the least consumer of that coal being Germany. Last year we sent to Germany 7,600,000 tons of coal from Great Britain, and it would be as well to remember that the German market was as free to British coal as our market was for German steel bars. In 1903, the export of coal to Germany amounted to 6,100,000 tons; in 1904 it was 6,400,000 tons, and in

1905 it was, as he had said, 7,600,000 tons. When we talked about retaliation we ought to remember that we had a particularly sensitive point here. If we talked about placing a tariff upon steel bars did the House not think the Germans would place a tariff upon British coals, which could not fail to mean a great reduction of wages and great distress. In 1904, the export of tinned plates and tinned sheets of British manufacture to Germany was 20,801 tons, the money value of which was £289,705. Last year that trade had increased to 29,706 tons, of the money value of £391,451. If we could have the use of the German steel bar as raw material for working into finished products he said that that was the kind of increase that they should like to have. They were told sometimes that trade followed the flag, but as a matter of fact trade followed the ship, and the country which possessed the greatest shipping tonnage in the world must have the greatest control over the industry of the world. If our free trade policy was so wrong as some hon. Members would have it to be, was it not remarkable that this country had been able to get control over more than half of the shipping trade of the world? We not only recognised that trade followed the ship, but the Germans did so because under the new German tariff "steam boilers for ships" were admitted free, as were also other materials in connection with ships. This one great country, whose example they were told the United Kingdom should follow, instead of increasing their taxes were abolishing the system of taxation in connection with the shipbuilding industry because they knew that England under free trade had the power of doing the shipbuilding for the whole world, including Germany. He supported the Motion before the House, not because he believed it was the only means, but because he readily joined with his hon. friend opposite in declaring that they wanted the taxation of mining royalties, ground values, and a system of nationalisation under which they would be able to place the railways on the same principle as they were in other competing countries.

Motion made, and Question, "That the debate be now adjourned,"—(*Sir Alexander Acland-Hood,*) put, and agreed to.

Debate to be resumed to-morrow.

LABOURERS (IRELAND) ACTS.

Return ordered, "giving (1) two or more examples of Reports of inspectors of the Local Government Board in respect of local inquiries held in the years 1904 and 1905; (2) two or more examples of Reports taken by the official note-takers of the proceedings on petitions under the Acts to the Privy Council."—(*Mr. O'Shee.*)

SALMON FISHERIES (IRELAND) BILL.

Order for Second Reading upon Monday, 26th March, read, and discharged. Bill withdrawn.

And, it being after One of the clock, Mr. Speaker adjourned the House without Question put.

Adjourned at six minutes after One o'clock.

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Tuesday, March 13th, 1906.

VISCOUNT POWERSCOURT.

Petition of Mervyn Richard Wingfield, Viscount Powerscourt of Powerscourt in the county of Wicklow, in the Peerage of Ireland, and Baron Powerscourt in the Peerage of the United Kingdom, claiming a right to vote at the elections of Representative Peers for Ireland; read, and referred to the Lord Chancellor to consider and report thereupon to the House.

THE LORD LOVAT.

Took the Oath.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

GREAT YARMOUTH WATERWORKS AND LOWESTOFT WATER AND GAS BILL [H.L.].

[SECOND READING.]

Order of the Day for the Second Reading read.

LORD BALFOUR OF BURLEIGH: My Lords, I rise to move the Second Reading of this Bill under circumstances which will be quite familiar to the great majority of your Lordships. But as some possibly may not be aware of them, I will simply state the reasons why I have been asked to discharge this duty. The noble Earl opposite, who is interested in the county, having given notice to move the rejection of the Bill, according to the usual custom which governs the etiquette in this House in these matters the Chairman of Committees does not move the Second Reading. I have, therefore, been asked by the promoters of the Bill to put in very general terms the case for the Bill before your Lordships, and to ask that your Lordships will be good enough to give the Bill a Second Reading. In doing so, I shall carefully avoid anything like an argument upon the merits of the Bill, because, whatever its merits, or whatever its demerits may be, the main part of my case is that the contents of this Bill are matter for discussion upstairs in the Committee Room and not in a Second Reading debate in your Lordships' House.

The object of the Bill is to get an increased supply of water for the two towns of Great Yarmouth and Lowestoft. The inhabitants number 80,000 or more, I am informed, and in the summer there is a considerable influx of visitors and of fishing population. I need not dwell upon the fact that for great communities of this kind it is of the first importance, on account of considerations of health and general sanitary considerations, that the supply of water should be of the best and the most abundant. The water companies are advised that the sources to which they propose to go under this Bill are the best that are available under all the circumstances. That is a point which can be much better discussed upstairs, where the Committee which I hope your Lordships will ultimately appoint will have the benefit of the best engineering and first-hand evidence, and where that evidence can be tested by examination and cross-examination in the usual way.

There is no fear of the questions which are at issue in this Bill going by default. I observe that petitions have been presented against it, or against, I should say, some of the clauses, by the Norfolk County Council, the Great Yarmouth Corporation, the Great Yarmouth Court Commissioners, the London Drainage Commissioners, the Ecclesiastical Commissioners for England, and some private persons who think their interests are affected. They make in those petitions various allegations. They allege that the proposals of the promoters of the Bill will interfere with the navigation of the River Bure, with boating and the mooring of vessels, and with, I believe, sailing and water expeditions upon the Broads. Also, the purity of the water is challenged, and the Ecclesiastical Commissioners say that their estates and their tenants will be injuriously affected. Those are the facts that are alleged. What substance is in them I do not know; but, my Lords, I have read through the Bill and through the petitions, and with such experience as I am able to bring to bear on the matter I am able to say that there is nothing whatever in this Bill which is beyond the ordinary practice of Parliament.

It is possible that the water companies are asking too much. I have known promoters of Bills ask for too much before. I think it is probably very seldom that any Bill comes before your Lordships which is not open to criticism of that sort. It is possible that even the County Council or the Corporation of these towns may be putting their case too high. But my point is this, that these matters can be efficiently and best tested, not in a Second Reading debate in which noble Lords like myself or others will make *ex parte* statements on second-hand information, but before an impartial and fair tribunal upstairs. That is really the whole of my case. I can see from reading the clauses of the Bill that there are some drastic proposals made. There are proposals for preventing people putting refuse into the river. It seems to me that that is a reasonable proposal, whether you are going to use it for a water supply or not, but certainly much more so if you are going to use it in this way. There are also allegations that the mooring of vessels will be interfered with unduly and navigation interrupted; but my point is that the Town Council of Great Yarmouth may be thoroughly well trusted to bring all these matters to the knowledge of the Committee upstairs before whom I hope your Lordships will send the Bill. There is no fear of injustice being done if it goes there and a thorough examination is conducted into the merits of the Bill and the opposition to it; but I do think your Lordships will be taking, I will not say an unprecedented, but a most unusual course, if you stop investigation at the very beginning in a matter of this kind.

The broad facts of the case are these, that there are communities of from 80,000 to 100,000 who are desirous of a better water supply, and who come to your Lordships' House and tell you that this is not only the best but the only source of supply available. In these circumstances I move the Second Reading of the Bill. I know that negotiations are going on for the settlement of most of the matters which are alleged in the various petitions. I do not know on what ground the noble Earl is going to oppose the Bill; I do not know whether he is commissioned to act for any of the bodies I have named; the reasons for his action are undisclosed, and therefore I shall say no more on the subject at the present time, but, if it should be necessary, I will ask your Lordships to hear me in reply.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2^{a}."—(*Lord Balfour of Burleigh.*)

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY: My Lords, I beg to move that the Bill be read a second time this day six months. I am perfectly aware that it is not very usual to move that a Bill of this kind should not be sent for consideration to a Committee. My reason for doing so in this case is this. There is in the county of Norfolk an extraordinarily strong feeling against the water of the Bure being taken away to supply Great Yarmouth and Lowestoft. To begin with, Lowestoft is not in the county of Norfolk, and we feel very strongly that as there is a pure river in Suffolk it could very well be made use of to supply Lowestoft with water. I am perfectly certain that the Bill, if it is not thrown out by your Lordships' Committee, should it be sent up to a Committee, will be thrown out in another place when it gets there; and for this simple reason. The Broads of Norfolk are the great playground in the summer months of all sorts and conditions of His Majesty's subjects, and if you take away a very small portion of the water from the River Bure you will inevitably destroy that playground. Many noble Lords know what a charming place the Norfolk Broads are, and if a very few inches of water only are taken from the Bure thousands and thousands of people will be deprived of the delightful holidays they now spend there in the months of August and September. That is one argument.

There is another very strong argument for not reading the Bill a second time. The Great Yarmouth Corporation have bitterly opposed it. Why? Nobody knows the reason for that action better than myself. The quality of the water is such that it is absolutely unfit to be given to the Yarmouth people to drink. I have been chairman of a rural sanitary authority hard by, and I know that the water of the River Bure is so absolutely impure that it cannot be used for any purpose. It is hardly fit for anything except for sailing up and down on. Many of the wells that have come under my notice as chairman of the rural sanitary authority to which I have referred have been proved to be absolutely impure and full of very bad organic matter. There was a very exhaustive inquiry and everything possible was done to prevent sewage matter running down into the Broads. It is, however, absolutely impossible to prevent the intakes into the River Bure. It is impossible to render it perfectly pure. The water is practically marsh water; it flows on mud. More than that, this is a tidal river and the tide comes up to the point at which it is intended to take the water. I do not think it is fair to propose to supply Great Yarmouth with brackish water, however much you try to filter it.

At the present time a Royal Commission is sitting on our public water-ways. The River Bure is a public water-way. There is a great deal of trade done on that river, and if you take water from it you will only take it in the summer time, which is the very time when it is wanted, not only for the amusement of the public, but also for trading purposes. The Port and Haven Commissioners are strongly opposed to this. One Commissioner is well known to your Lordships—I refer to Mr. Taylor. He has taken an enormous interest in this matter, and he assures me that if in the summer time we lose two inches of water it will materially affect our trading wherries. Again, if two inches of water are taken, or even if one inch only is taken, we shall be deprived of the facilities we now have for landing stone for our roads, and if we lose these facilities we shall have to convey stone by rail and our rates will considerably suffer in consequence. It may be said that we can dredge, but that is impossible.

There is another reason why I hope your Lordships will not consent to this Bill being read a second time. The Yarmouth Corporation say in their petition, not only that the water is bad, but that the supply of water—and I agree with them entirely in this—to a large place like the borough of Yarmouth should be in the hands of the local authority, and that no power should be given to a company to interfere with them or add to the price that will have to be paid at a future date on the acquisition of the undertaking by the Corporation. If this scheme is carried out the local authority, when they purchase, as I hope they will, will have to undo all that is done under this Bill. The people of Norfolk do not want to lose the playground which is a source of great income to them; the Port and Haven Commissioners do not wish to see imperilled the wherries that trade up and down; and, more than that, the Great Yarmouth Corporation do not want to have foisted upon them a water supply which I believe, and which they are perfectly certain, is absolutely impure. For that reason I move the Amendment standing in my name.

Amendment moved—

"To leave out the word 'now,' in order to insert at the end these words: 'this day six months.'"—(*The Earl of Kimberley.*)

THE CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES (The Earl of ONSLOW): My Lords. The noble Earl has taken the course, which is not very usual in your Lordships' House, of asking the House to reject this Bill on Second Reading. He has alleged, as a reason for taking that course, that the Bill may interfere materially with the enjoyment of the general public on the Broads of Norfolk, and he has appealed to some of your Lordships who know that country to assist him in rejecting the Bill. The noble Earl said the water was impure. I happen to have had the advantage on more than one occasion of enjoying a cruise on the Norfolk Broads, and I have drunk—at least some of the crew drank—the water of the Norfolk Broads. I cannot charge my memory with what I drank on board the vessel, but the crew drank the water and so far as I know no one was any the worse.

The noble Earl informed your Lordships that the Bill would be strenuously opposed. By whom is it to be opposed? It is going to be fought by the Norfolk County Council; and I ask your Lordships whether any more proper body could be entrusted with the defence of the interests of the county, and, indeed, of all those who frequent the Norfolk Broads, than the Norfolk County Council. I venture to think that your Lordships, who are not acquainted with all the facts and circumstances of this case, may quite safely leave the defence of the Norfolk Broads in the hands of the Norfolk County Council. The whole of the circumstances will be gone into with the aid of able counsel, and I hope your Lordships will not refuse to allow the Bill to go in the ordinary course to a Select Committee. If it were not opposed by those quite capable of taking care of themselves, my view might be different. But in view of the fact that it is opposed by the Norfolk County Council, who distinctly allege in their petition that it will interfere with the pleasure traffic on the Broads; and by the Corporation of Great Yarmouth, who allege that the water is not of a quality that should be supplied to Great Yarmouth, I think your Lordships may safely allow the Bill to go before a Committee. I ask your Lordships, therefore, not to depart from your usual practice, but to send this Bill for consideration to a Select Committee.

THE LORD PRIVY SEAL (The Marquess of RIPON): My Lords, I would ask my noble friend behind me not to press his Amendment to a division. The noble Earl has stated a great variety of circumstances which he thinks tell against the Bill, but I agree with the noble Earl the Chairman of Committees that they are just the questions to be inquired into by a Select Committee. It would, I think, be very unusual, if not altogether inconsistent with the ordinary practice of this House, if we were to attempt to intercept this Bill on Second Reading on the grounds which have been brought forward. I venture to hope, therefore, that my noble friend will withdraw his Amendment.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY: After what the noble Marquess the Leader of the House has said, I beg leave to withdraw my Amendment.

Amendment, by leave of the House, withdrawn.

On Question, Bill read 2^a.

The Earl of Onslow.

Scottish Union and National Insurance Company Bill [H.L.]. Presented; read 1^a; and referred to the Examiners.

Milford Docks Bill [H.L.]; H. R. Baines & Company Bill [H.L.]; Crystal Palace Company Bill [H.L.]. Reported, with Amendments.

Wallasey Tramways and Improvements Bill [H.L.]. Read 2^a (according to Order), and committed: The Committee to be proposed by the Committee of Selection.

Dover Harbour Board Bill [H.L.]. Read 3^a, and passed, and sent to the Commons.

Mersey Docks and Harbour Board Bill [H.L.]; Penllwyn Railway and Road Bill [H.L.]; London and North Western Railway Bill [H.L.]; Great Western and Rhymney Railway Companies Bill [H.L.]; Barry Railway Bill [H.L.]; Western Valleys (Monmouthshire) Sewerage Board Bill [H.L.]; Cardiff Railway Bill [H.L.]. Report from the Committee of Selection, That the following Lords be proposed to the House to form the Select Committee for the consideration of the said Bills; (viz.), E. Verulam, E. Dartrey (chairman), L. Monson, L. Seaton, L. Somerton (*E. Normanton*); agreed to; and the said Lords appointed accordingly. The Committee to meet on Thursday, the 22nd instant, at eleven o'clock; and all petitions referred to the Committee, with leave to the petitioners praying to be heard by counsel against the Bills to be heard as desired, as also counsel for the Bills.

Mersey Railway Bill [H.L.]; Wirral Railway (Extension of Time) Bill [H.L.]; Wallasey Tramways and Improvements Bill [H.L.]; Accrington District Gas and Water Board Bill [H.L.]; Holyhead Water Bill [H.L.]; Fulwood Urban District Water Bill [H.L.] Wolstanton United Urban District Council Gas Bill [H.L.]; Preston, Chorley, and Horwich Tramways Bill [H.L.]. Report from the Committee of Selection, That the following Lords be proposed to the House to form the Select Committee for the consideration of the said Bills; (viz.), E. Cawdor (chairman), V. Hill, L. Ellenborough, L. Abinger, L. Northbourne;

agreed to; and the said Lords appointed accordingly. The Committee to meet on Tuesday next, at Eleven o'clock; and all petitions referred to the Committee, with leave to the petitioners praying to be heard by counsel against the Bills to be heard as desired, as also counsel for the Bills.

Wallis' Divorce Bill [H.L.]. House in Committee (according to order). An Amendment made; Standing Committee negatived. The Report of Amendment to be received on Thursday next.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

BRITISH GUIANA.

Correspondence relating to disturbances in British Guiana.

HISTORICAL MANUSCRIPTS (ROYAL COMMISSION).

Report on Franciscan manuscripts preserved at the Convent Merchants Quay, Dublin.

EMIGRATION STATISTICS (IRELAND).

Report and Tables for the year 1905.

BIRTHS, MARRIAGES AND DEATHS, AND VACCINATION (SCOTLAND).

Fifty-first Annual Report of the Registrar-General in Scotland for the year 1905, and Forty-first Annual Report on Vaccination.

EDUCATION (SCOTLAND).

Return showing the expenditure from the grant for Public Education in Scotland in the year 1905; with statistics.

Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table.

BRIDLINGTON PIERS AND HARBOUR.

Abstract of the Annual General Account for the year ended 26th July, 1905. Delivered (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table.

NAVAL PRIZE BILL [H.L.].

[SECOND READING.]

Order of the Day for the Second Reading read.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR (Lord LOREBURN): My Lords, this Bill is for the consolidation of the law relating to Naval Prize of War. It has been long desired by the Admiralty, and has been passed through this House I think more than once by the late Government. I do not know why it was that such a useful measure did not proceed further. I hope it will have a better fate this time.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª."—(*The Lord Chancellor.*)

On Question, Bill read 2ª, and committed to a Committee of the Whole House on Thursday next.

PRIZE COURTS BILL [H.L.].

[SECOND READING.]

Order of the Day for the Second Reading read.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR: My Lords, this is a Bill in very much the same category as the last. It has already passed this House under the patronage of the late Administration. Its object is to extend the powers under Section 4 of the Commissioners for Oaths Act, 1889, which relates to the appointment of persons to administer oaths in prize proceedings, so as to enable oaths to be administered abroad by Naval Officers on board His Majesty's ships for any purpose connected with proceedings in a prize court. There is nothing at all of a contentious or political character in this Bill, and I hope it will be passed into law this session.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª."—(*The Lord Chancellor.*)

On Question, Bill read 2ª, and committed to a Committee of the Whole House on Thursday next.

JUDICATURE BILL [H.L.].

[SECOND READING.]

Order of the day for the Second Reading read.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR: My Lords, this is a Bill of very small scope.

Its object is merely to amend the Judicature Acts, 1873 to 1894, with respect to the persons in whom the power of making Rules of Court under those Acts is vested, by enabling a provincial solicitor to be added to the Rule Committee. It is very desirable that we should invoke the assistance of someone who has country experience. This is a Bill of very modest pretentions, and I hope your Lordships will give it a Second Reading.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª."—(*The Lord Chancellor.*)

On Question, Bill read 2ª, and committed to a Committee of the Whole House on Thursday next.

Polling Districts (County Councils) [H.L.] Bill; Polling Arrangements (Parliamentary Boroughs) Bill [H.L.]. House in Committee (according to order); Bills reported without Amendment; Standing Committee negatived; and Bills to be read 3ª on Thursday next.

ROYAL COMMISSION ON MOTOR CARS.

Lord MONTAGU of BEAULIEU: My Lords, I rise to ask His Majesty's Government whether, if the Royal Commission on Motor Cars reports before Easter, there will be any legislation thereon during this session. I make no apology for saying a word or two this afternoon on this subject and for asking His Majesty's Government to make some definite statement so that we may know whether or not they have any legislation in view. I understand that the other day, in another place, an answer was given, not in very precise terms, but intimating that so far as His Majesty's Government are concerned they will not this year introduce any legislation. The reply, however, was not given in so clear a form that we could draw an absolute conclusion therefrom.

It is well known that a Royal Commission has been sitting for some time on this subject. It was supposed at the end of last session that the Commission would report in time for legislation to be introduced this session, but we now understand that it will certainly not report before Easter. It is highly undesirable that any legislation should be framed in a hurry on this very difficult question, which requires much time and consideration if the legislation is to be satisfactory to the public and to the mercantile community. The Act under which motorists run their cars to-day was passed in 1903 somewhat in a hurry. Noble Lords will remember that it left this House in one form, and assumed, to its detriment, a totally different form in the House of Commons. It is very desirable that there should be no such hasty and ill-considered legislation this session.

I would suggest that the present Act, which would otherwise expire this year, should be included in the Expiring Laws Continuance Bill. We should then have the advantage of plenty of time in which to consider the Report of the Royal Commission. At the same time I would plead that there should be no undue delay, for the present state of the law is satisfactory neither from the point of view of the public nor from the point of view of the motorist. There are complaints every day of misbehaviour on the part of motorists—complaints which, in many cases, are well founded, and at the same time motorists suffer grievances and hardships which were not intended when the Bill of 1903 was introduced and which show that the present legislation requires amendment. But the new legislation should be well thought out, and for that reason I suggest continuing the present Act for another year.

I understand that the Royal Commission have taken evidence from a great variety of witnesses on both sides, and I would ask whether it would not be possible to issue an interim Report. The reference to the Commission was a very wide one; it comprised all kinds of matters intimately concerned with motoring. Bad driving and the dust question were included, and if the portion of the Commission's Report dealing mainly with these two subjects could be produced it would be of great advantage. These are two very urgent subjects, and I would not suggest for one moment that action upon them should be put off for another year, for in the interests neither of motorists nor of the general public should the present state of things in this direction be allowed to continue. I beg to put the Question standing in my name.

EARL RUSSELL: My Lords, I should like to associate myself with the noble Lord opposite in his appeal that, whatever happens, there shall be no more hasty legislation on this subject. We have had enough of hasty legislation in the present Act, and, speaking from the point of view of motorists, we suffer considerably in consequence of the ill-considered provisions of the Act of 1903. Though I recognise the improbability of our getting fresh legislation this session, I should be very sorry indeed to see the present Act continued indefinitely. There is one particular blot on the Act which makes its continuance longer than necessary very undesirable. I refer to the insertion in that Act by the other House of an artificial speed limit. Your Lordships took the more sensible view that an artificial speed limit was the very worst way of protecting the public against danger. I think one may fairly say that, although not in the opinion of motorists a wise or useful provision, it has been so administered in the larger part of the United Kingdom as not to cause great hardships; but in certain counties that particular section of the Act is administered without any regard to the object for which it was inserted in the statute. This is much to be deprecated, because it creates bad feeling between motorists and the police, and tends to make the administration of the law more difficult. For that reason I hope that the present Act will not be continued longer than is necessary, and that this point will be dealt with. There are many penalties in the Act which are out of all proportion to those in other Acts for corresponding offences. I hope that the Report of the Royal Commission will not be much longer delayed, as it will require a great deal of careful consideration both by His Majesty's Government and by those who represent motorists.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF AGRICULTURE AND FISHERIES (Earl CARRINGTON): My Lords, I can assure the noble Lord opposite that His Majesty's Government fully recognise the importance of the subject he has brought before the House. As the noble Lord is aware, the Royal Commission only commenced their labours in September, and they are unable to give the Government any idea as to when they will be able to report. In these circumstances it is manifestly impossible for the Government to make any pronouncement at all on the subject; but I can assure the noble Lord that there will be no delay or undue haste. As it is almost certain that the Report will be presented so late this year as to make it impossible for any new legislation to be introduced, the present law will be continued for twelve months, and before the expiration of that time we hope that a Bill will be brought in which will be acceptable to noble Lords on both sides of the House.

PATENTS, DESIGNS, AND TRADE MARKS (REGISTRATION OF PATENT AGENTS) BILL [H.L.].

A Bill to amend the law relating to patent agents. Was presented by the Lord Coleridge; read 1ª; and to be printed. (No. 30.)

ELECTIONS (MEETINGS IN SCHOOLROOMS) BILL [H.L.].

A Bill for granting the use of public elementary schoolrooms for the purpose of holding meetings in support of candidates for Parliamentary and other elections. Was presented by the Lord Burghclere; read 1ª; and to be printed. (No. 29.)

HOUSE OF LORDS OFFICES.

Leave given to the Committee to report from time to time. First Report from the Select Committee made, to be printed, and to be considered on Thursday next. (No. 28.)

COMMITTEE OF SELECTION FOR THE STANDING COMMITTEE.

Report from, That the Committee have nominated the following Lords to serve on the Standing Committee :

L. Archbp. of Canterbury.
L. Chancellor.
L. Archbp. of York.
E. Crewe.
(*L. President.*)
M. Ripon.
(*L. Privy Seal.*)
D. Bedford.
D. Devonshire.
D. Northumberland.
M. Winchester.
M. Lansdowne.
M. Salisbury.
M. Bath.
M. Linlithgow.
E. Liverpool.
(*L. Steward.*)
E. Derby.
E. Denbigh.
E. Stamford.
E. Chesterfield.
E. Jersey.
E. Lauderdale.
E. Carnwath.
E. Waldegrave.
E. Portsmouth.
E. Spencer.
E. Clarendon.
E. Cadogan.
E. Malmesbury.
E. Westmeath.
E. Onslow.
E. Beauchamp.
E. Stradbroke.
E. Vane.
(*M. Londonderry.*)
E. Cawdor.
E. Camperdown.
E. Lichfield.
E. Yarborough.
E. Russell.
E. Dartrey.
E. Feversham.
E. Lytton.
E. Ancaster.
E. Halsbury.
E. Plymouth.
V. Falkland.
V. Hutchinson.
(*E. Donoughmore.*)
V. Hampden.
V. Cross.
V. Knutsford.
V. Llandaff.
V. Goschen.
V. Ridley.
V. Churchill.
V. Selby.
V. St. Aldwyn.
L. Bp. London.
L. Bp. Hereford.
L. Bp. Southwark.
L. Zouche of Haryngworth.
L. Clifford of Chudleigh.
L. Barnard.
L. Saltoun.
L. Balfour.
L. Monson.
L. Kenyon.
L. Stewart of Garlies.
(*E. Galloway.*)
L. Ribblesdale.
L. Harris.
L. Ranfurly.
(*E. Ranfurly.*)
L. Rosebery.
(*E. Rosebery.*)
L. Kilmarnock.
(*E. Erroll.*)
L. Poltimore.
L. Denman.
L. Oranmore and Browne.
L. Kintore.
(*E. Kintore.*)
L. Elgin.
(*E. Elgin and Kincardine.*)
L. Belper.
L. Brougham and Vaux.
L. Kinnaird.
L. Lawrence.
L. Wolverton.
L. Sandhurst.
L. Reay.
L. Tweedmouth.
L. Monk Bretton.
L. Herries.
L. Monkswell.
L. Ashbourne.
L. Montagu of Beaulieu.
L. Thring.
L. Macnaghten.
L. Ashcombe.
L. Newton.
L. Stanmore.
L. Davey.
L. Burghclere.
L. James.
L. Heneage.
L. Ludlow.
L. Newlands.
L. Avebury.
L. Alverstone.
L. Shuttleworth.
L. Allerton.
L. Waleran.
L. Knaresborough.
L. Desborough.
L. Weardale.
L. Haversham.

Read, and ordered to lie on the Table.

House adjourned at Five o'clock to Thursday next, half-past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Tuesday, 13*th March*, 1906.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Ascot District Gas (Electric Lighting) Bill; North East Lincolnshire Water Bill. To be read a second time To-morrow.

North West London Railway Bill (by Order); Twickenham and Teddington Electric Supply Bill (by Order); Metropolitan Electric Supply Bill (by Order.) Second Reading deferred till Tuesday next.

Millwall Dock Bill. Reported, with an Amendment; Report to lie upon the Table.

North Metropolitan Tramways Bill. Reported, with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

PETITIONS.

CANADIAN CATTLE (IMPORTATION).

Petition from Liverpool, for alteration of Law; to lie upon the Table.

LOCAL AUTHORITIES (QUALIFICATION OF WOMEN) BILL.

Petition from Leicester, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (SCOTLAND) ACT (1894).

Petition of the Scottish Poor Law Medical Officers' Association, for alteration of Law; to lie upon the Table.

PUBLIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS (RELIGIOUS TEACHING).

Petitions against alteration of Law; From Ballam; Bleasby; Bolton (two); Clitheroe; Colne; Eccles; Long Framlington; Oldham (three); Out Rawcliffe (two); Ribby with Wrea (two); Shaw; Stacksteads and Newchurch; Treales; Whalley; Wiswell; and Withington; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

HISTORICAL MANUSCRIPTS (ROYAL COMMISSION).

Copy presented, of Report on Franciscan Manuscripts preserved at the Convent, Merchant's Quay, Dublin [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

EMIGRATION STATISTICS (IRELAND).

Copy presented, of Emigration Statistics of Ireland for the year 1905 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY (PENSIONS).

Copy presented, of Return showing the names of all constabulary officers now in receipt of pensions, of all head constables, sergeants, and constables, and of all widows and children to whom pensions have been granted since the Constabulary Estimate for 1905–6 was prepared, with the amount and date of pension in each case [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

EDUCATION (SCOTLAND).

Copy presented, of Return showing the expenditure from the grant for public education in Scotland in the year 1905, with Statistics [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

BIRTHS, DEATHS, MARRIAGES, AND VACCINATION (SCOTLAND).

Copy presented, of the fifty-first annual Report on the births, deaths, and marriages in Scotland for 1905, and forty-first annual Report on Vaccination [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

BRITISH GUIANA.

Copy presented, of correspondence relating to disturbances in British Guiana [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

PAPER LAID UPON THE TABLE BY THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE.

Bridlington Piers and Harbour.—Copy of Abstract of the general annual account for the year ending 26th July, 1905 [by Act].

LABOURERS' COTTAGES (IRELAND).

Return ordered, "in respect of labourers' cottages in Ireland, showing (1) County; (2) Rural District; (3) Valuation of Rural District; (4) Number of labourers' cottages (a) built, (b) in course of construction; (5) Amount of loans (a) sanctioned, (b) received; (6) Amount required to be raised annually in repayment of loans sanctioned; (7) Amount which would be raised by the maximum rate of one shilling in the pound allowed for purposes of Acts; (8) Rate per pound required to raise amount specified in Column 6; (9) Present poundage rate levied on Rural District for Labourers Acts purposes; (10) Amount of Exchequer Contribution for the year ended the 31st day of March, 1906; (11) Amount of rent received from tenants of cottages and plots during year; (12) Unissued balance, if any, of County's share of Exchequer Contribution; (13) Totals per County and Province, and for all Ireland; (14) The Return to be made up to the 31st day of March 1906 (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 188, of Session 1904)."—(*Mr. Flavin.*)

LABOURERS' COTTAGES (IRELAND).

Return ordered, "in respect to Labourers' Cottages in Ireland, showing the number of Cottages applied for in every Poor Law Union in Ireland under the latest completed Scheme in connection with the Labourers (Ireland) Acts, together with the number of applications for extra half-acres to Cottages already built under the Acts under said Scheme;

how many of these applications for Cottages and extra half-acres were sanctioned; the amount of Expenses connected with such Scheme; and in what way applied. The Return to be made up to the 21st day of March, 1906."—(*Mr. Flavin.*)

ALIENS (NATURALISATION).

Address for "Return showing the names of all Aliens to whom Certificates of Naturalisation have been issued and whose Oaths of Allegiance have, between the 1st day of January, 1905, and the 31st day of December, 1905, been registered at the Home Office, giving the country and place of residence of the person naturalised, and including information as to any Aliens who have, during the same period, obtained Acts of Naturalisation from the Legislature (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 106, of Session 1905)."—(*Mr. Herbert Samuel.*)

PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS (EXPENSES).

Address for "Return of Charges made to Candidates at the General Election of 1906, in Great Britain and Ireland, by Returning Officers, specifying the total Expenses of each Candidate (both exclusive and inclusive of Returning Officers' Charges) delivered to the Returning Officers pursuant to the Corrupt and Illegal Practices Act, 1883, and the number of votes polled for each Candidate (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 352, of Session 1901)."—(*Mr. Lamont.*)

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Postal Porters and the Post Office Wages Committee.

MR. WILES (Islington, S.): To ask the Postmaster-General whether he proposes to include within the reference of the Select Committee of Inquiry into the grievances of postal servants that portion of the staff known as porters; but, if not, will he investigate their claims in common with those of the stores and engineering staff, as promised by the late Postmaster-General.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) It will be for the Committee to decide whether they will consider the porters as one of the principal classes of Post Office servants.

Training of Subalterns in Royal Marines.

MR. BELLAIRS (Lynn Regis): To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty what was the mean proportion of subaltern's time that has been associated with the division in the case of the ten junior captains, Royal Marine Artillery and Royal Marine Light Infantry, in view of the statement in Lord Cawdor's Memorandum that only a few subalterns have ever been associated with the division.

(*Answered by Mr. Edmund Robertson.*) In the case of the ten junior captains, R.M.A. and R.M.L.I., the mean time spent on shore while attached to their divisions, during the period of their service as subalterns, including instructional training, was: Lieutenants, R.M.A., two years 341 days, out of a total service of five years 101 days. Lieutenants, R.M.L.I., two years 182 days, out of a total service of six years 153 days. All subalterns are attached to the various divisions as their headquarters, and the statement referred to had reference to the small proportion of subalterns available for duty at the divisions.

Post Office Night Messengers—Full Pay for Sick Leave—Good Conduct Stripes.

MR. YOXALL (Nottingham, W.): To ask the Postmaster-General if he can see his way to allow to night messengers full pay while on sick leave, and to grant them the right to earn good-conduct stripes and the accompanying payments.

(*Answered by Sydney Buxton.*) Adult night telegraph messengers, like other unestablished Post Office servants, receive two-thirds pay during sick absence within limits varying according to the length of their service. The allowance of full pay during sick absence is confined to established officers; and I fear I cannot recommend an exception in favour of night messengers, nor has it been thought desirable to extend to them the privilege of wearing good conduct stripes.

The Case of Thomas Reilly, Rural Postman.

MR. THOMAS SMYTH (Leitrim, S.): To ask the Postmaster-General if he will inquire into the case of Thomas Reilly, who has been in the postal service for seventeen years, and at present is rural postman from Mohill to Annaghmore, in county Leitrim; whether he will allow him 3s. per week increase of pay, which has been given to other rural postmen; and if he will grant him the two additional good conduct badges to which he is entitled.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) I find that Thomas Reilly would have been entitled to an increase of 1s. 6d. a week in his wages as from the 1st of April, 1905, if his conduct during the preceding twelve months had been satisfactory. Unfortunately the necessary certificate to that effect could not be given; but the question of granting the increase to Reilly will come up again for consideration shortly. Reilly holds one good conduct stripe, and in ordinary course a second stripe would become due to him on the 27th of April next if it could be certified that he had rendered five years' unblemished service since the date of the last award, 27th April, 1901. This certificate, however, cannot be given, and it will be necessary to postpone for a time the award of a second stripe.

Postal Facilities at South Park, Reigate.

MR. BRODIE (Surrey, Reigate): To ask the Postmaster-General whether, in view of the fact that the district of Reigate called South Park is an integral part of the borough of Reigate, and within a short distance of the head post office, arrangements can be made to give the district in question the same postal facilities as the other parts of the borough.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) In the case of Reigate, as in many other cases, it is not practicable for the municipal boundaries of the town to be accepted in all respects as the boundaries of the town delivery area, but inquiry shall be made on the question whether South Park should be included in that area, and the result shall be communicated to the hon. Member.

Examination for Post Office Male Learners in Ireland.

MR. KENNEDY (Cavan, W.): To ask the Postmaster-General if he will state whether there is any set time for holding examinations for male learners in Ireland; whether there is a vacancy in Belturbet, county Cavan, and, if so, since when; and will he say if it is to be filled up, and when.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) Owing to the excess of staff generally throughout Ireland, examinations for learners are at present suspended. There is no vacancy for a learner at Belturbet.

South African Mines—Returns of Persons Employed.

MR. CHARLES HOBHOUSE (Bristol, E.): To ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies, whether under the law of the late South African Republic mine managers in the Transvaal were required to render to the Government, on prescribed forms, returns showing the number of persons employed in the mine and the results obtained; whether before the war these records were available to the public; whether since the war some undertaking has been given to the mine owners by which these records are treated as confidential, and are no longer accessible to the public; and, if so, whether the Government will give instructions that these and all similar returns shall again be made accessible to the public.

(*Answered by Mr. Churchill.*) The regulations requiring returns from the mines for statistical purposes appear to be the same now as they were under the law of the late South African Republic. The Secretary of State is not informed as to whether or to what extent the present practice differs from that before the war as to permitting access to these records, but will make inquiry. Lord Elgin is clearly of opinion that the fullest possible information should be accessible to the investing public.

Native Education in Natal.

MR. STANLEY WILSON (Yorkshire, E.R., Holderness): To ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies if he will lay upon the Table the correspondence in which his Department is pressing the Government of Natal for larger expenditure upon Native education.

(*Answered by Mr. Churchill.*) In reply to my hon. friend, I have to state that any correspondence between His Majesty's Government and the Government of Natal, or between His Majesty's Government and the Government of any other self-governing colony, upon the subject of Native education or upon any other subject, which it may be desirable to present to Parliament, will be laid upon the Table of the House as convenient opportunity may offer.

Pensions from the Consolidated Fund paid to retired Officials of the Exchequer and Audit Department.

MR. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick): To ask the Secretary to the Treasury, how many retired officials of the Exchequer and Audit Department are paid pensions out of the Consolidated Fund, the gross amount so received by these officials, and whether this amount is clearly stated in the Estimates.

(*Answered by Mr. McKenna.*) There is only one pension so paid. The amount of this pension is £1,333 6s. 8d. The Estimates provide only for payments charged on the annual Votes of Parliament, not for payments charged directly on the Consolidated Fund. The latter payments are shown in detail in the annual finance accounts.

Director of Public Education in Bengal.

MR. HUGH LAW (Donegal, W.): To ask the Secretary of State for India whether, in view of the injury which will be inflicted upon recruiting for the Indian educational service, by the proposed appointment, even though temporary, of a gentleman not belonging to that service to the directorship of public education in Bengal, he can now see his way to disallow such appointment.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Morley.*) I have, I think, already explained the state of this case. I can only repeat that I have no reason to suppose that the temporary and exceptional appointment in question has had, or will have, any injurious effect upon recruiting, and I do not propose to disallow it.

Sale of the Rosscarbery Estate.

MR. EDWARD BARRY (Cork County, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that at the sale of the Rosscarbery portion of the Carbery estate, in the early part of last year, an agreement was arrived at between landlord, present occupier (Deane), and Patrick M'Carthy, evicted tenant, to submit his case to the Estates Commissioners for immediate settlement; that the farm was excluded from the area of sale to Deane for the purpose of reinstating M'Carthy; and whether, in view of the condition of the dwelling house, and of the fact that the present tenant, who is not resident, has refused to pay rent to the landlord pending a settlement being arrived at, and that M'Carthy has been for over twelve months an inmate of the Clonakilty workhouse, steps will be taken to accelerate the action of the Estates Commissioners in giving effect to the understanding entered into at the time of sale for the reinstatement of the evicted tenant.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) Proceedings for the sale of this estate are pending before the Estates Commissioners, but the farm occupied by Mr. Deane is not part of the estate which is being sold. The Commissioners have no knowledge whether the remaining facts are as stated in they Question, but they intend to make inquiries into Patrick M'Carthy's case as soon as possible.

Sale of the Mount Shannon Estate.

MR. O'SHAUGHNESSY (Limerick, W.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he can say whether the sale of the Mount Shannon estate, in the county of Limerick, to the Estates Commissioners, has been completed, and when will the evicted tenants, to whom allotments of the untenanted land on the estate have been made, get possession of the same; and whether they will get grants for the purpose of restocking the land, to enable them to begin life on a sound financial basis.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The Estates Commissioners are negotiating for the purchase of the estate of Mrs. Nevins, Mount Shannon, but the purchase has not yet been completed. The questions of allocating the lands, and of making grants to evicted tenants who may be allotted holdings, cannot be decided until the sale has been completed.

Return of Labourers' Cottages, Ireland.

MR. FLAVIN (Kerry, N.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will grant a complete Return up to 31st March, 1906, in connection with Labourers' Cottages (Ireland), similar to Parliamentary Paper, No. 188, issued in session 1904.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) Yes, sir.

MR. FLAVIN: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will grant a Return, up to 31st March, 1906, in connection with Labourers' Cottages (Ireland), similar to Parliamentary Paper, No. 148, issued in Session 1904.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) Yes, sir.

Withdrawal of Flax Expert at Dromara, County Down.

MR. MACVEAGH (Down, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the services of the flax expert have been withdrawn from the Co-operative Flax Society of Dromara, county Down, at three weeks' notice; whether he is aware that the expert was managing a scutching business, and was in charge of a mill and a seed business, and that his sudden removal will disorganise the whole arrangements, and cause much waste of money, the abandonment of the experiments already instituted, and the dissolution of the society; whether he can state on what ground the Department of Agriculture has decided without notice to discontinue the payment of part of the expert's salary; and whether, in view of the results of the decision, it will be reconsidered.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) On the 3rd instant the Department of Agriculture notified to the society in question that after the 31st instant they would not contribute to the salary of the flax expert who manages the society's scutch mill. The society has received financial assistance from the Department for the past five years, and ought, in the opinion of the Department, to be now self-supporting. It will not be necessary that this year's field experiments, which have been commenced at Dromara, should be abandoned as the result of the Department's decision, for if the society should not retain the expert the Department will undertake the supervision of the trials.

Sale of the O'Hara-Trench and Ashtown Properties.

MR. JOHN ROCHE (Galway, E.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the price which Lord Ashtown has agreed to pay for the O'Hara-Trench property, in the county of Galway, was above or below the tenant's offer, twenty-three years' purchase of second-term rents plus the bonus, and, if so, how much; whether Lord Ashtown has yet paid the purchase money; and, in the event of a sale of either the O'Hara-Trench or Ashtown properties, will the Estate Commissioners make inquiry into all the facts of the case.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The Estates Commissioners inform me that they have no knowledge of the sale referred to in the first part of the Question. No sale has in this case been effected through them. In the event of either of the estates mentioned coming before the Commissioners, they will make all due investigation.

Soldiers in Civil Prisons.

MR. CLAUDE HAY (Shoreditch, Hoxton): To ask the Secretary of State for War why two soldiers convicted of using obscene language, two soldiers convicted of being absent from Militia training, one soldier sentenced to punishment for incurring a debt, one soldier convicted of being drunk and disorderly, two soldiers convicted of giving a false answer on attestation, two soldiers convicted of fraudulent enlistment, and one soldier convicted of ill-treating a donkey are now confined in civil prisons to undego punishment without such punishment carrying with it discharge from the Army; whether he will cause soldiers convicted of these offences, and sentenced to punishment not involving discharge from the Army, to be incarcerated in military prisons and not in civil prisons; and, if not, will he state the reason for not doing so.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) These men were presumably convicted by the civil power, except in one of the two cases of so-called fraudulent enlistment, and would consequently undergo their sentence in a civil prison. As regards the two classes classified by the authorities as fraudulent enlistment, one was of a man awaiting removal by military escort for disposal by the military authorities, who was therefore not under conviction, and the other was of an army reservist who had made a false answer on attestation. It must be remembered that a person charged with making a false answer on attestation may be handed over to the civil authorities for disposal under Section 99 of the Army Act, and absentees from Militia training under Section 23 (2) (b) of the Militia Act. It rests with the local military authorities to decide whether a soldier convicted by the civil authority shall be discharged from the service, and each case would be considered on its merits.

Regular Adjutants with Volunteer Regiments.

LORD WILLOUGHBY DE ERESBY (Lincolnshire, Horncastle): To ask the Secretary of State for War how many Volunteer regiments in Scotland have an officer of the regular forces attached to them as adjutant.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) Of sixty-four Volunteer units in Scotland entitled to adjutants fifty-four have adjutants from the regular forces.

Army Contracts and the Fair Wages Clause.

MR. T. F. RICHARDS (Wolverhampton, W.): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether the fair wage contract clause is inserted in all Army contracts for boots and clothing, and what action is taken against contractors who are found to be evading its provisions.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) Yes, Sir. The clause is inserted in all Army contracts for boots and clothing. Any alleged case of evasion is thoroughly investigated, and such action is taken as is held to be appropriate to the particular case, but under any circumstances the contractor is compelled to pay the rate which is in accordance with the clause.

Support of Regimental Bands.

MR. LEA (St. Pancras, E.): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether he is aware that in some regiments the band is supported partly out of contributions from the canteen fund; and that, as the latter is solely and only the property of the men of the regiment, he will give orders that this practice be stopped at once, more especially as the non-commissioned officers and men of the regiments concerned are not consulted.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) Nothing is known at the War Office of any case in which the band is supported in any way by contributions from the canteen fund, and under no circumstances should the funds be so expended. Would my hon. friend be kind enough to inform me of any cases in which this has occurred, to enable me to make immediate inquiry?

Courts Martial in the 16th Lancers.

MR. LEA: To ask the Secretary of State for War if he will state the number of general, district, and regimental courts martial held in the 16th Lancers during the twelve months ending 28th February, 1906, also the number of regimental entries in this regiment during that period as apart from those awarded by the courts martial above referred to; and if he will also state what position this regiment occupies as regards crime when compared with the other cavalry regiments serving at Home.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) The particulars for the year ended 28th ultimo are as follows:—general courts martial, nil; district courts martial, sixty-nine; regimental courts martial, six; other regimental entries 300. There are no particulars available for the same period for the Army generally, consequently comparison cannot be made, but for the twelve months ended 30th September, 1905, this regiment stood third on the list of cavalry regiments at home as regards the number of punishments awarded by courts martial.

Court Martial on Gunner H. Flanagan.

MR. CLAUDE HAY: To ask the Secretary of State for War if he will state the grounds upon which the conviction of Gunner H. Flanagan, X Battery, Royal Horse Artillery, was quashed; the names of the officers who composed the court martial at which Flanagan was convicted; and what punishment, if any, has been inflicted upon these officers for their conduct in this matter.

MR. CLAUDE HAY: To ask the Secretary of State for War whether Gunner H. Flanagan, X Battery, Royal Horse Artillery, was tried by a district court martial for fraudulently enlisting in the 6th Dragoon Guards on 7th February, 1902, and that he was supposed to be a Private Elborne who had actually been guilty of the offence stated; whether, at that trial, the official documents upon which the charge against Flanagan was based showed that Elborne had two tattoo marks on his left forearm, when, as a matter of fact, he had two tattoo marks on his right forearm; whether Flanagan immediately proved he had no tattoo marks on his forearm; whether Flanagan was not permitted to read the documents which were put in to secure his conviction; and whether Elborne was officially described as five feet six inches in height and Flanagan is six feet in height.

MR. CLAUDE HAY: To ask the Secretary of State for War whether the Governor of Cork Prison, at or about 9 a.m. on the 23rd December last, read to Gunner H. Flanagan, X Battery, Royal Horse Artillery, a charge sheet and gave it to him officially, at the same time warning him that he would be tried by a district court martial at 11 a.m. the same day; and whether the trial took place on the 23rd December.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) As I have already explained to the hon. Member, the conviction was quashed because identity with the deserter Elborne had not been proved. As regards the officers composing the court martial, no punishment has been inflicted upon them, nor is it, in any respect, called for. I do not, therefore, see any reason for publishing their names. The trial took place on the 23rd December, and Gunner Flanagan was warned for trial between 9 and 10 a.m. on the 22nd. As regards the other points raised in reference to the court martial proceedings, it would not appear desirable that such details should be discussed through the medium of Question and Answer in the House.

Brussels Sugar Convention Report.

MR. HAROLD COX (Preston): To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs if he will state why the spring session of the International Sugar Commission under the Brussels Convention has been postponed for two months; and if there is any reason why a report of the sessions, especially when it is so brief as the report of the proceedings in October last (Commercial, No. 3, 1906, Cd. 2813), should not be issued in future more promptly.

(*Answered by Secretary Sir Edward Grey.*) The session of the Permanent Commission has been postponed for two months pending the receipt of further information by the Permanent Bureau and His Majesty's Government respecting the Brazilian sugar system. It is not possible to prepare the Report until the final proof of the record of proceedings is in the hands of the British delegate, but every effort will be made to issue it more promptly in future.

British and Foreign Shareholders of South African Mines.

SIR HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central): To ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies if the records of the Colonial Office bear out the calculation that there are 200,000 British and 55,000 Foreign shareholders in the mines of the Transvaal besides 10,000 in South Africa; and if the attention of the Secretary of State has been called to the fact that the property of these investors, many being persons of small means, has suffered a depreciation of upwards of £20,000,000 since the announcement of the policy of His Majesty's Government in South Africa; and further, if he can indicate what proportion of the real estate in the Transvaal and Orange River Colony is in British hands.

(*Answered by Mr. Churchill.*) The records of the Colonial Office do not enable the Secretary of State to answer the first part of the Question as to the number of investors, or to add to what is common knowledge as to the second. The Secretary of State is aware that depreciation has taken place recently in the shares in Transvaal mines. These investments are of a speculative nature and subject to considerable fluctuation from time to time. Their depreciation has been constant during the last two years, and has become pronounced since the importation of Chinese labour. The Secretary of State is unable to state what proportion of the real estate is in British hands.

Mining Machinery in the Transvaal.

Sir HOWARD VINCENT: To ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies, if he is in a position to state the value of the mining machinery imported into the Transvaal between 1st January, 1902 and 31st December, 1905, and to give the proportions imported from the United Kingdom, Germany, and the United States respectively.

(*Answered by Mr. Churchill.*) The total imports of mining machinery were as follows:—1902, £1,364,330; 1903, £1,402,681; 1904, £718,832; 1905, £728,350. The proportions as between the United Kingdom, the United States, and Germany, were as follows:—

	1902.	1903.	1904.
	£	£	£
United Kingdom - -	906,129	926,393	475,638
United States -	229,200	187,087	197,007
Germany - - -	121,666	215,137	41,003

Particulars of the countries of origin are not yet available for the year 1905.

Royal Engineers in Ordnance Survey.

Mr. BELL (Derby): To ask the hon. Member for South Somerset, as representing the President of the Board of Agriculture, if he can state how many sappers have been drafted from the Royal Engineers into the Ordnance Survey, and how many civilians on the Ordnance Survey are now being discharged in consequence; whether he will explain why the Ordnance Survey division in Derby is being broken up, and how many men are being discharged in consequence; and whether he can give the ages and service of such men.

(*Answered by Sir Edward Strachey.*) The number of sappers drafted into the survey companies during the last twelve months is twenty-one, of whom fifteen were employed on the survey as civilians previous to enlistment. No civilians are now being discharged in consequence of the drafting of sappers. The Derby division of the Ordnance Survey is being broken up, owing to the fact that the general revision of the survey of Great Britain is practically completed. The staff of the Survey has been continuously reduced for some time past by not filling up the vacancies that have occurred, the men no longer required being transferred, as far as possible, to other work. It has, however, been found impossible to provide in this way for the whole of the staff of the Derby division, and notice of discharge has been given to seventeen assistants. I shall be glad to supply my hon. friend with a statement of the names, ages, and services of the men to whom notice has been given.

Establishment of a Telegraph Office at Johnston's Bridge, County Leitrim.

Mr. THOMAS SMYTH: To ask the Postmaster-General if the necessary guarantee is given, will a telegraph office be established at Johnston's Bridge post office, county Leitrim, the distance from Dromod to Johnston's Bridge being only about three miles.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) I am having inquiry made into the circumstances, and will communicate the result to the hon. Member.

Position of Clerks to Surveyors of Taxes.

Mr. MACVEAGH: To ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether he is aware that clerks to surveyors of taxes are not treated as part of the permanent staff; whether he will state the number of such clerks at present employed; and the number of such clerks who have served five, ten, fifteen, twenty, twenty-five, and thirty years in tax offices, with a view to showing the permanent nature of their employment.

(*Answered by Mr. McKenna.*) The Answer to the first part of the Question is in the affirmative. The number of the clerks referred to is approximately 590. The information asked for in the last sentence would take some time to collect, and I must ask the hon. Member to give me considerably longer notice on this point.

The Arrests of Women in Downing Street.

Mr. SUMMERBELL (Sunderland): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he is aware that three women were arrested outside the Premier's official residence on Friday morning last, taken publicly through the streets to the police station, and that, after being detained there some time, were ultimately discharged without any charge being made against them; and whether he will explain why, after being locked up, no charge was preferred against them.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Gladstone.*) Three women were apprehended for disorderly conduct outside the Prime Minister's official residence on Friday morning last. The action of the police was proper, and the women were only released on the personal intercession of my right hon. friend the Prime Minister.

Administration of Aliens Act.

Sir W. EVANS GORDON (Tower Hamlets, Stepney): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what percentage of aliens excluded from this country since the recent Act came into force were Russian subjects.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Gladstone.*) Up to the end of February 139 alien immigrants did not receive leave to land; and, of these, it appears that eighty-eight were of Russian nationality, a percentage of 63·3.

Sir HOWARD VINCENT: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he can give the House the names and callings of all persons permitted to attend the meetings of the Immigration Board on behalf of aliens seeking admission; if representatives of British subjects, likely to be injured by such admission, will be authorised, as also of representatives of officers of public health; and if strict rules will be framed to secure the free judicial exercise of their powers by the Immigration Boards.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Gladstone.*) I can best answer the hon. Member's Question by quoting No. 23 of the rules under the Aliens Act, which runs as follows:—The immigrant (and the master owner, or agent of the ship, if an appellant), the immigration officer, and the medical inspector, if present, shall be entitled to be heard, and the Board may put such questions to the alien or other appellant, and make such inquiries, if any, as they think fit. No other person shall be entitled to be heard without special leave from the Board. Subject as aforesaid, the procedure of the Board shall be such as the Board may determine. A further rule is in draft providing for reasonable facilities to be given to the Press, as I explained to the House on Monday.†

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† See (4) *Debates*, cliii., 916.

Sir HOWARD VINCENT: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department at what ports Immigration Boards have been established; and if he will take care that no new rule, or any alteration of any rule framed upon the report of an expert committee after full inquiry, is transmitted for the guidance of Immigration Boards, without giving both Houses of Parliament full opportunity of becoming acquainted therewith.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Gladstone.*) The ports are Cardiff, Dover, Folkestone, Grangemouth, Grimsby, Harwich, Hull, Leith, Liverpool, London (which includes Queenborough), Newhaven, Southampton, and the Tyne ports (comprising Newcastle, North Shields, and South Shields, which are in effect treated as one port). No rules or orders made under the Act are required thereby to be laid before Parliament, and, in the circumstances, I am not prepared to accede to the hon. Member's proposal.

Mr. COATES (Lewisham): To ask the First Lord of the Treasury if he will defer the operation of the new regulations under The Aliens Act, 1905, until Parliament has had an opportunity of discussing the subject.

(*Answered by Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman.*) I understand from my right hon. friend the Home Secretary that the letter of advice to Immigration Boards and the instructions to immigration officers have already been sent out; that the Order restoring the number twenty for the purpose of defining an immigrant ship has been made and will be gazetted to-day; and that, though the rule as to the admission of the Press to board meetings is still in draft, the intention of it has already been conveyed in the letter to the Boards. In these circumstances I am not prepared to assent to the hon. Member's suggestion.

Director of Public Instruction in Bengal.

Sir THOMAS ESMONDE (Wexford, N.): To ask the Secretary of State for India if the Government of Bengal will persist in their proposal to appoint a member of the Civil Service to the position of Director of Public Instruction, in view of the strong feeling that exists against it.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Morley.*) I would refer the hon. Member to an Answer which I gave on this subject on the 1st instant.† I have no reason to suppose that the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal will abandon the intentions which I then explained.

Condition of Courtown Harbour and Blackwater, County Wexford.

Sir THOMAS ESMONDE: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if his attention has been directed to the condition of Courtown Harbour and Blackwater, county Wexford; and if he will have inquiry made as to what can be done to assist the fishing population of these districts.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The attention of the Department of Agriculture has been called to the condition of Courtown Harbour, the entrance to which was cleared of accumulating sand and stone last year. The cost of the operations was provided for by the Department and the county council in equal proportions. The sea outside Courtown is shallow, and an extension of the existing harbour is desirable; but the Department's contribution could only be a small part of the necessary cost, which would be very considerable. About fifteen row boats and a few vessels of about eight tons fish from Courtown. Coal is occasionally landed there. Under any circumstances periodical dredging would be necessary to keep the harbour clean of sand. There is no harbour at Blackwater, and hardly any fishing is carried on at that place at present. As the beach is an open sandy one, the construction of a pier harbour is the only possible project with a view to development, and, if there were a substantial local contribution, the Department would be prepared to further consider the matter.

Colonials and Army Commissions.

Mr. HAROLD COX: To ask the Secretary of State for War to what extent commissions in His Majesty's Army are reserved for the sons of colonists; and whether any reciprocal arrangements have been made by which commissions in the regular forces of the self-governing Colonies are reserved for Englishmen, Scotchmen, or Irishmen.

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† See (4) *Debates*, clii., 1301.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) A certain number of commissions are allotted annually to candidates from the local military forces of each Colony and to students in the chartered universities in the Colonies, but hitherto the number of commissions allotted has not been taken up. I am not aware that any commissions in the regular forces of the self-governing Colonies are reserved in the manner alluded to in the Question.

Cost of the British Army.

Dr. MACNAMARA (Camberwell, N.): To ask the Secretary of State for War if he can state the total cost to the National Exchequer of the British Army, regular and auxiliary forces, during each of the years 1896 to 1905 inclusive.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) The figures are as follows:—1895–6, £18,941,650; 1896–7, £18,693,309; 1897–8, £20,051,854; 1898–9, £20,634,186; 1899–1900, £43,655,801; 1900–1, £92,305,792; 1901–2, £93,567,363; 1902–3, £69,673,851; 1903–4, £37,441,598; 1904–5, £29,595,651. These figures include the annuities charged on the Votes in repayment of loans and the estimated expenditure incurred by other departments on Army account, but not the expenditure under loans.

Strength of the British Army in United Kingdom, South Africa, and British India.

Dr. MACNAMARA: To ask the Secretary of State for War if he can state the total strength of the British Army, regular forces, serving in the United Kingdom, in South Africa, and in British India, respectively, for each of the years 1896 to 1905 inclusive.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) Return of the strength of the British Army, regular forces, serving in the United Kingdom, in South Africa, and in British India, respectively, for each of the years 1896 to 1905 inclusive.

Date.	United Kingdom.	South Africa.	India.
1st January, 1896 - -	104,396	3,573	78,043
" 1897 - -	99,066	7,053	76,995
" 1898 - -	97,539	8,414	74,623
" 1899 - -	104,873	9,316	74,466
" 1900 - -	96,094	103,329	66,581
" 1901 - -	135,591	162,910	63,023
" 1902 - -	116,918	165,386	63,958
" 1903 - -	151,617	47,427	75,740
1st October 1903 - -	128,801	31,442	76,380
" 1904 - -	136,342	22,127	76,938
" 1905 - -	128,954	19,780	78,061

Relative Cost per Head of the Population of the Army of Great Britain and Foreign Countries.

DR. MACNAMARA: To ask the Secretary of State for War if he can state the cost per head of the population in any recent year of the regular armies of the United Kingdom, Germany, France, Russia, and Austria, respectively,

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) The figures are as follow:—The United Kingdom,* 11s. 2d. per head; Germany,† 12s. 0¼d. per head; France,‡ 16s. 6d. per head; Russia,§ 5s. 5d. per head; Austria, 7s. 3¼d. per head.

War Office Purchases of Land in Essex.

MR. WHITEHEAD (Essex, S.E.): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether the War Office is in negotiation for the purchase of alleged manorial and freehold rights over part of the foreshore at Shoebury, in Essex; whether he is aware that the fishermen of Leigh-on-Sea, and other places in the district, claim and have long exercised a right of fishing over such foreshore; whether, in the event of the War Office purchasing any such manorial rights and the freehold interest in the foreshore, he will take care that the fishermen in the district are permitted to fish over such foreshore, subject to reasonable regulations in regard to military shooting; and whether he will secure that there is no alienation or exclusive appropriation to any individual or company, by lease or otherwise, of the right of fishing over the foreshore and sands in that district under the control of the War Office.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) The War Department is in negotiation for the purchase in question. The fishing rights which are claimed have been contested in an action at law by the vendors. The litigation is not yet at an end. It is not, therefore, possible at the present time to give any Reply to the latter part of the Question.

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

Dockyard Labour.

MR. CLAUDE HAY (Shoreditch, Hoxton): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty if, after the adjustment of the workmen's services in His Majesty's Dockyards, a decreased number of men will be employed.

THE SECRETARY TO THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. EDMUND ROBERTSON, Dundee): No accurate opinion can yet be formed what reduction, if any, is likely to occur.

MR. CLAUDE HAY: When will the right hon. Gentleman be able to say?

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: I cannot tell.

Naval Volunteer Officers' Outfit Allowance.

MR. CATHCART WASON (Orkney and Shetland): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty if the Admiralty have approved the grant to officers of Naval Volunteers for outfit allowance on similar terms to those on which the said allowance is granted to Volunteer land officers.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: The question is still under consideration.

Demerara Labour Troubles.

MR. O'GRADY (Leeds, E.): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether his attention has been called to the action taken by the Governor of Demerara in the recent labour troubles; whether he is aware that the Governor instructed the employers not to negotiate or concede the claims of the transport workers and general labourers, promising, in the event of disturbance, the intervention of armed police; and whether, in future, steps will be taken to prevent the interference of His Majesty's representatives in the Colonies in negotiations between workpeople and employers respecting wages and conditions of employment.

*THE UNDER-SECRETARY FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. CHURCHILL, Manchester, N.W.): It is hardly possible conveniently or indeed intelligibly to deal within the limits of an ordinary question and answer with the issues raised by the hon. Gentleman. I have therefore laid Papers before Parliament in which the Governor's action in discouraging compliance with demands for higher rates of wages, his reasons for acting as he did, and the Secretary of State's opinion of his policy are extensively set forth.

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* Including cost of Imperial Forces in the Colonies (not India).

† Not including pensions and cost of certain coast defences.

‡ Including Colonial Army.

§ Including Asiatic Russia.

MR. O'GRADY: Has the information been obtained from official sources or did the Colonial Office take care to ask the views of the men's leaders and of the employers?

*MR. CHURCHILL: The information fills a very extensive Blue-book and I think the hon. Gentleman will find it presents a tolerably complete view of these unfortunate occurrences.

MR. KEIR HARDIE (Merthyr Tydvil): Has instructions been given that nothing of the kind must again occur?

*MR. CHURCHILL: Yes, Sir. I think the hon. Gentleman will find on reading the Blue-book that the position taken up by the Government from the beginning has been to warn the Governor to be careful only to intervene on grounds of the public safety and not to use the forces of the Crown for the purpose of adjusting wages disputes between the workers and their employers.

Women Franchise in South Africa.

MR. JOWETT (Bradford, W.): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether it is intended to include the political enfranchisement of women in the constitution which is about to be conferred upon the Transvaal and the Orange River Colonies.

*MR. CHURCHILL: No, Sir.

The Transvaal War Contribution.

*MR. T. F. RICHARDS (Wolverhampton, W.): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the mine owners in South Africa have paid any of the £30,000,000 promised by them; and, if not, what action is contemplated by the present Government to redeem this money.

*MR. CHURCHILL: I am unable for the present to add anything to the Answer given to the hon. Member for the Bosworth Division of Leicester on 21st February,† but I would take this opportunity of reminding hon. Members that the arrangement was not entered into by the mine owners only. Some misunderstanding appears to have arisen from confusing the proposed payment of £30,000,000 by the Colony with the undertaking of certain financial houses to underwrite, on stated conditions, £10,000,000 of a loan to be raised by the Transvaal Government for the purpose of the contribution.

MR. BELLOC (Salford, S.): Has any of the £10,000,000 been paid?

*MR. CHURCHILL: One condition of the underwriting the £10,000,000 by the financial houses was that the condition of the market should be favourable to the raising of the loan. That condition unfortunately has not been realised, but I can assure the hon. Gentleman we shall not lose sight of the matter.

The Souffriere Disaster.

MR. MITCHELL-THOMSON (Lanarkshire, N.W.): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies what amount of the fund, raised in 1902 for the specific purpose of relieving distress caused by the eruption of the Souffriere volcano in St. Vincent, remains unspent; and to what purpose it is proposed to apply the balance of the fund.

*MR. CHURCHILL: The Administrator of St. Vincent reported on the 9th of December, 1905, that the unexpended credit balance of the fund in the books of the Colony amounted on that date to £30,515 11s. 5d. Expenditure on certain services intended to repair the injury to the island caused by the eruptions has been authorised; and instructions have been given for the retention of the sum of £25,000 as a permanent investment. The interest on this amount will be devoted to defraying the cost of poor relief in St. Vincent, and the principal will be retained as a special reserve to meet any possible recurrence of acute distress in the future.

Colonial Governments and Chinese Labour.

MR. WALKER (Leicestershire, Melton): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether, in view of the incompleteness of the information contained in the volumes of correspondence, he will publish, as a Parliamentary Paper, the telegrams of the Premiers of Australia and New Zealand, and the Resolutions of the Houses of Parliament of Australia, New Zealand, and Cape Colony on the subject of Chinese labour for the Transvaal, and the purport of any similar action taken by any other Colonial Premiers or Colonial Houses of Parliament.

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† See (4) *Debates*, clii., 338.

*MR. CHURCHILL: The expressions of opinion to which the hon. Member refers have already been published in Parliamentary Papers. For Australia see page 28 of Cd. 1941 and page 3 of Cd. 2104; for New Zealand page 231 of Cd. 1895, page 28 of Cd. 1941, page 47 of Cd. 2401; for the Cape Colony pages 44, 45, and 54 of Cd. 1895; and for Natal page 3 of Cd. 1986. It would be contrary to practice and rule to reprint these Papers.

Port-of-Spain Municipal Council.

MR. LAMONT (Buteshire): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he is aware that there is a strong feeling in the Colony of Trinidad in favour of the re-establishment of the elective municipal council of the borough of Port-of-Spain, abolished during his tenure of office by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham; and whether the Secretary of State contemplates any action in the matter.

*MR. CHURCHILL: The question of the municipal government of Port-of-Spain was referred by the Governor to a local committee, who presented an interim report on the 31st of January. They recommended that the existing authorities exercising municipal functions in Port-of-Spain should be amalgamated; but on the question of the constitution of the future municipal authority they were only able to arrive at a negative recommendation, viz., that the proposal that it should be composed partly of elected and partly of nominated members should be abandoned. The Secretary of State is not at present in possession of the Governor's views on the subject, and must, therefore, defer for the present any statement as to future policy. If my hon. friend has special knowledge of this question I should be glad if he would communicate with me, so that I may bring his views to the notice of the Secretary of State.

Import Duties in Morocco—The Spirit Trade.

MR. KEIR HARDIE (Merthyr Tydvil): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether the British Plenipotentiary at the Algeciras Conference voted against the proposal of the Moorish delegates to put a duty of 100 per cent. *ad valorem* on all spirituous liquors imported into Morocco; and whether any explanation of the vote can be given.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir EDWARD GREY, Northumberland, Berwick): It does not appear that any vote was taken on a separate proposal about spirituous liquor. There were general proposals to raise the duties on all imported trade by duties varying from 20 to 100 per cent. The unanimous opinion of all the delegates was that this would render all trade impossible, and they objected to the proposals as a whole. I hope that special measures for dealing with liquor traffic may be taken before the Conference separates, and, if so, they will be supported by the British delegate.

British Trade with Siberia.

MR. FELL (Great Yarmouth): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether there are any consuls or vice-consuls representing the British Empire in any of the ports or cities in Siberia; and whether, in view of our growing trade with that country, he will consider the advisability of establishing a consul at either Omsk, Tomsk, Irkurtz, Vladivostock, or some other city in that country.

SIR EDWARD GREY: There are no British Consular Officers at present in Siberia; there was a British Commercial Agent at Vladivostock from November, 1902, to March, 1904, and the question of a fresh appointment is under consideration. No representations have recently been made to the Foreign Office by those interested in trade with Siberia in favour of the establishment of consulates at the places mentioned, but the suggestion will not be lost sight of. Their creation would, of course, require the consent of the Russian Government.

Brussels Sugar Convention.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestreshire, Forest of Dean): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether any statement can yet be made to the House as to the nature of the fresh instructions to be addressed to the British delegate attending the Permanent Committee under the Sugar Convention, in reference to the adjourned subject of the penalisation of sugar imports from Brazil, now postponed from March to May; and whether the protocols of the October sitting can be placed as usual in the Library.

SIR EDWARD GREY: No statement can yet be made as to the instructions to be given to the British delegate. The answer to the second Question is in the negative. The protocols have now been placed in the Library.

MR. BOWLES (Lambeth, Norwood): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether, in view of the importance to this country of the decisions arrived at by the Permanent Committee appointed under the Brussels Sugar Convention, he will arrange that, immediately upon the receipt by the Foreign Office of the *procès-verbaux* of any of its proceedings, they shall then forthwith be printed, either in the original French or accompanied by an English translation, and circulated as a Parliamentary Paper.

SIR EDWARD GREY: These *procès-verbaux* are usually bulky. They shall, however, be sent to the Library of the House with as little delay as possible. The last set in the form in which it has been received has been placed in the Library. The bound volume has not yet been issued.

Commercial Union between Servia and Bulgaria.

DR. RUTHERFORD (Middlesex, Brentford): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether the commercial union as originally concluded between Servia and Bulgaria has the approval of His Majesty's Government; and whether any steps have been or are being taken in support of it.

SIR EDWARD GREY: His Majesty's Government were not consulted by either country as to the expediency of the arrangement. The Answer to the second Question is in the negative.

Fifeshire Mine Inspection.

MR. J. HOPE (Fifeshire, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether, seeing that the output of coal in Fifeshire has doubled during the last twenty years, and looking to the number of colliery disasters in the county recently, he will appoint additional inspectors of mines, and make it a condition that one, at least, shall reside in Fifeshire.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. GLADSTONE, Leeds, W.): The question whether any improvement can be made in the present system of administering the Mines Acts is one of those that are to be referred to the proposed Royal Commission on Mines. The needs of Scotland will, no doubt, be fully considered by the Commission.

Factory Inspectors' Promotions.

MR. CHIOZZA MONEY (Paddington, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he will consider the advisability of providing the means of promotion for the assistant factory inspectors by occasionally reserving an appointment as factory inspector for competition amongst experienced assistants only, the appointment to be made after a special examination, arranged with regard to the practical knowledge which such experienced assistants should possess.

*MR. GLADSTONE: I propose to take into consideration the position, generally, of factory inspectors' assistants, including the question of the opportunities to be given them for obtaining promotion. The hon. Member's suggestion deserves and will receive attention.

Waiters' Hours of Labour.

MR. GEORGE ROBERTS (Norwich): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether it is proposed to introduce legislation to limit the hours of employment of waiters, waitresses, and bar attendants; and, if so, can he give the approximate date when such legislation will be introduced.

*MR. GLADSTONE: Under the Shop Hours Act of 1892 young persons, namely, those under eighteen, may not be employed for more than seventy-four hours a week, including meal times, in public houses or refreshment houses. Otherwise there is no limit on the employment of waiters, etc., but I am afraid I cannot make any promise as to legislation on this subject.

Vivisection.

MR. SOARES (Devonshire, Barnstaple): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether, in view of the uneasiness prevailing in the public mind on the practice of vivisection, he will advise His Majesty's Government to grant a Royal Commission to inquire into the whole system.

*MR. GLADSTONE: The present law was based on the Report of the Royal Commission of 1876. Since then there have been great changes in medicine and the methods of scientific research. I assent to the view that it is desirable that an inquiry should be held, and I will consider what form the inquiry should take.

Wisbech Vaccination Cases.

MR. GEORGE WHITE (Norfolk, N.W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been called to cases before the magistrates sitting at Wisbech on 24th February, when several labourers were summoned and fined for breaches of the Vaccination Acts, although they had previously, in accordance with the provisions of the Acts, pleaded their conscientious objections to vaccination before the same court and had been refused the exemption certificate; and whether he will call the attention of the Lord Chancellor to cases where magistrates in North West Norfolk constantly refuse to grant these exemptions, though the applicants lose a day's wages and give other proofs of their conscientious objections.

*MR. GLADSTONE: I have made inquiry in this matter from the County Bench sitting at Wisbech, to which I presume the Question relates, but I find that the facts are not quite correctly stated in the Question. It is reported to me that the five persons summoned to the court under the Vaccination Acts on the day mentioned were not fined, but were simply ordered to have their children vaccinated, and that none of these five had ever made application to that court for certificates of exemption.

MR. GEORGE WHITE: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that in several of the cases alluded to the men had costs laid on them to the amount of 10s. 6d., nearly a week's wages?

MR. CROOKS (Woolwich): Cannot the right hon. Gentleman make some arrangement by which men without losing a day's work may apply for a certificate?

*MR. GLADSTONE: I am quite aware that it presses hard in individual cases, but I have to administer the law as it stands, and I do not see how I can grant relief in the direction indicated.

MR. CROOKS: Will you make it known to the justices that they must grant certificates where there is a conscientious objection?

*MR. GLADSTONE: A circular was issued two or three years ago to justices' clerks. I will consider if it is desirable to issue another.

River Wandle.

MR. ROSE (Cambridgeshire, Newmarket): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he is aware that the London, Brighton, and South Coast Railway are sinking a well adjacent to their railway at Carshalton with the intention of pumping water for the supply of their stations in London, and that the result of this action will be seriously to lower the level of the River Wandle, to deprive the mills situate on that river of the water power on which they rely for carrying on their trade, and seriously to endanger the health of a large district; and what steps he proposes to take in the matter.

THE PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY TO THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. KEARLEY, Devonport): The matter would not appear to be one in which the Department have authority to intervene, but I have communicated with the railway company, and have received a reply of which I am sending my hon. friend a copy. I may say that the company, relying upon expert advice, state that there is no possibility that their borings will have the results feared.

Private Bags in Post Offices.

*MR. CLOUGH (Yorkshire, W.R., Skipton): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether, in view of the fact that it was the recognised custom up to the end of 1905 for private-bag fees to be collected by sub-postmasters, for the fees to be charged according to regulations, for these fees to be retained by the sub-postmasters and not subject to be remitted to the head office, and that the sub-postmasters upon receiving their appointments were assured that these fees would not be interfered with or diverted, he will explain why, in December last, regulations were issued directing these fees to be paid to the head office, thus taking them out of the hands of the sub-postmasters, and say if the whole of these fees will be refunded to the sub-postmasters; and will these fees, in future, be counted as salaries or as emoluments.

THE POSTMASTER-GENERAL (Mr. SIDNEY BUXTON, Tower Hamlets, Poplar): Prior to the 1st of January last all private box and bag fees at sub-offices not paid on the Head Office Scale were collected by the sub-postmasters who retained the fees. It was found that, although the same scale of charges was in force as now, many sub-postmasters did not charge the proper fees, and in some cases made no charge at all. In order to ensure that the fees chargeable should be uniform at all sub-offices and thus obviate complaint from the public it was decided that, beginning with this year, the fees should be collected by the Department direct, and be repaid to the sub-postmasters who were entitled to payment, in the form of allowances, paid at the same time as the salaries are paid. They will be counted as emoluments.

Perforated Stamps—Dishonest Postmasters.

MR. T. L. CORBETT (Down S.): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether his attention has been called to the case of a bankrupt postmaster named Braham, who was in the habit of perforating stamps for various large city firms, and who on his bankruptcy owed some £4,000 for stamps so received and not returned; whether he will consider the question of compensation to the firms so defrauded; whether it is his practice to secure a deposit or other security for the honesty of such postmasters; and whether it is his intention to prosecute in this case.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: I am aware of the bankruptcy in question. Mr. Braham was a sub-postmaster in Tabernacle Street, E.C., who in addition to the business conducted for the Post Office, carried on a private business as a perforating press maker and perforator of postage stamps. The Post Office does not supply the public with perforated stamps, or sell stamps at other prices than those indicated by their face value or on other than cash terms. Mr. Braham's transactions in relation to the perforation of stamps being thus of a purely private character, there is no ground for compensating Mr. Braham's creditors at the expense of the taxpayer. A sub-postmaster is required to find security for his fidelity in that capacity, but not for debts incurred in his private business. So far as the Post Office is concerned no question of prosecution arises.

MR. T. L. CORBETT: Cannot the perforating be done at Somerset House?

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN (Worcestershire, E.): I should like to press the Question. I remember that while I was Postmaster-General considerable difficulty arose in regard to similar cases. I think the point is worth considering.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: Yes, I will consider it. No doubt people who have bought stamps for perforating have lost money under these cases.

Customs Department Abstractor Clerks.

MR. CLAUDE HAY: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether the scale of overtime pay now enjoyed by the clerks in the Customs Department will be made to apply to the abstractor clerks in the

Statistical Office, who are engaged upon preparing the Board of Trade Returns of Imports and Exports, and of whom many are now paid considerably less per hour for overtime work than for day work, the nature and responsibility of the work being the same.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. McKENNA, Monmouthshire, N.): The abstractors are a class of clerks with a scale of overtime payments common to the whole Civil Service. The Customs Clerks form a class peculiar to the Customs Department. I see no reason in the fact that these two entirely distinct classes serve in the same Department, for giving to the abstractors a higher rate of overtime payment than that which obtains throughout the Service.

Trades Union Wages Rates in Government Contracts.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer what is the total increase of wages which he anticipates will be payable to employees of the Admiralty, War Office, Civil and Revenue Departments, respectively, in consequence of the decision of His Majesty's Government to pay in all cases the local trade union rate of wages; and whether a similar condition will be embodied in all Government contracts in future.

MR. McKENNA (for Mr. ASQUITH): I cannot accept the suggestion in the Question as an adequate or accurate statement of the policy of the Government, which was fully explained by the First Lord of the Admiralty and the Secretary of State for War, in reply to a deputation which waited upon them on the 22nd ulto., and in this House by my right hon. friend the Member for Dundee in his speech upon the Navy Estimates on the 1st inst.† I am not at present in a position to estimate the additional charge (if any) which the adoption of that policy will impose upon the Exchequer. The question of what modification (if any) is needed in the form of Government contracts is under consideration.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: Am I to understand that the Treasury sanctioned this proposal without having any estimate of the cost involved?

MR. McKENNA: They could not have an estimate of the cost involved until they knew the amount of work to be done.

Whisky Prosecution.

MR. KILBRIDE (Kildare, S.): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether his attention has been drawn to the convictions against traders in North London for selling patent spirit as whisky, and what action he proposes to take to prevent the repetition of such sales; whether he will in future allow operations to be carried on in Government warehouses in which patent spirit is bottled in bond, described as fine old Scotch whisky, and exported to our Colonies.

MR. McKENNA: My attention has been called to the convictions. The Excise Duty Acts do not discriminate between pot-still and patent-still spirits, and, as the duty upon both is the same, the Inland Revenue officials, whose functions are confined to the protection of the Revenue, have no authority to concern themselves in the matter. I understand that notice of appeal against the decision of the magistrate has been given, so that in any case the matter is still *sub judice.*

Graduation of Income-Tax.

MR. SAMUEL EVANS (Glamorganshire, Mid.): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether it is necessary or expedient to have a public inquiry before the income-tax can be graduated and differentiated; and, if so, whether he will appoint a Committee to inquire into the subject upon an early date.

MR. McKENNA (for Mr. ASQUITH): The practical difficulties in the way of graduating or differentiating the income-tax are very considerable, and I am certainly of opinion that some sort of inquiry—probably by a Select Committee, but I am not prepared to commit myself as to this at the present moment—should take place before any definite scheme is formulated. I will make a further statement at an early date.

MR. CROOKS: What about the Committee appointed by Mr. Ritchie?

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† See (4) *Debates,* clii., 1374–5.

MR. McKENNA: That Committee reported long ago.

MR. CROOKS: What was the result.

MR. SAMUEL EVANS: Oh, this question was excluded from that Committee. What does my hon. friend mean by an early date?

MR. McKENNA: That Question had better be addressed to the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

State Pensions.

MR. BARNES (Glasgow, Blackfriars): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will state how many persons are in receipt of pensions from the National Exchequer, and the cost of such pensions for the last financial year for which the figures are available.

MR. McKENNA (for Mr. ASQUITH): The approximate figures for 1905–6 are as follows:—

	Pensioners.	Cost of Pensions. £
Naval -	45,822	2,297,635
Military -	103,542	3,489,000
Civil -	22,451	2,116,734
Totals	171,815	7,903,369

MR. CROOKS: Would that come off the estimated amount of £26,000,000 if every one over sixty-five years of age had 5s. a week.

MR. McKENNA: A certain amount would, but a great deal of it is in respect of persons under sixty-five years of age.

The Mall Improvement.

MR. CLAUDE HAY: I beg to ask the First Commissioner of Works whether all the lands and buildings, necessary for the completion and opening of the new road from St. James's Park to Charing Cross, have been purchased; when the purchase was completed; and when the foundations of the buildings and entrance to Charing Cross will be completed.

THE FIRST COMMISSIONER OF WORKS (Mr. HARCOURT, Lancashire, Rossendale): The Answer to the first Question is Yes; to the second Question, 1883 to 1885; to the third Question, The foundations ought to be completed by the end of June this year.

New Government Offices in Parliament Street.

*COLONEL LEGGE (St. George's, Hanover Square): I beg to ask the First Commissioner of Works whether work has been suspended on the new Government offices at the corner of Great George Street and Parliament Street; and, if so, for what period.

MR. HARCOURT: No, Sir.

King's Scholarship Examination.

MR. BOLAND (Kerry, S.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education whether he is aware that the pupil teachers at Northwich entered for King's Scholarships last December, and have now been informed that the result of the examination will not be published until June; and whether, seeing that this decision entails on these pupil teachers loss of salary and prevents them from advertising for places, he can take steps to publish the result sooner.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION (Mr. BIRRELL, Bristol, N.): The difficulty referred to in the Question will not occur again. The present year is a year of transition, examinations being held both in December last and at Easter; it is necessary to announce the results of the two examinations simultaneously in order that those entering for the examination in December may not have a preference for the Training Colleges.

Irish Land Commission.

MR. GINNELL (Westmeath, N.): I beg to ask Mr. Attorney-General for Ireland what statutory authority, if any, has the Irish Land Commission for discriminating between the parties in rent-fixing cases by requiring a tenant serving an originating notice to have a fair rent fixed, or on whom such a notice is served by a landlord, to endorse on his notice or in reply to the landlord's notice a statement of improvements made by him or by his predecessor in title, and for treating as the landlord's improvements not so claimed, though manifestly made by the tenant or his predecessor; and will he explain why is not the landlord subjected to a corresponding requirement.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. CHERRY, Liverpool, Exchange): The hon. Member is under a misapprehension as to the practice of the Land Commission Court. Under Rules issued on March 13th, 1899, full particulars of improvements claimed by a landlord are required to be given to the same extent as of improvements claimed by a tenant; and the Rules are the same whether the originating notice is served by the landlord or by the tenant.

MR. GINNELL: Has any landlord complied with the rule?

MR. CHERRY: Yes, Sir, I have known cases.

Mr. Gardiner, R.M.

MR. DUFFY (Galway, S): I beg to ask Mr. Attorney-General for Ireland whether his attention has been called to the action of Mr. Gardiner, R.M., who, at the petty sessions at Ardrahan, on the 6th ultimo, admitted evidence on oath which was calculated to expose men to odium and obloquy, without any necessity whatever arising for such action on his part; and whether he will take steps to prevent Mr. Gardiner from following such a procedure in future.

MR. CHERRY: The resident magistrate referred to informs me that he did not receive any evidence which he did not believe to be pertinent to the case before him. I have no power whatever to control the admission of evidence by magistrates in cases pending before them. This jurisdiction, so far as it exists, is vested in the King's Bench Division of the High Court of Justice in Ireland.

Stud Horses in Ireland.

MR. JOHN O'CONNOR (Kildare, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction for Ireland bought a sire horse named Balsamo in England and sold him to an Irish farmer-purchaser for sire purposes; if so, what price did the Department pay for the horse and for what amount was he sold; was there a profit made on the transaction; and, if so, will he state whether it was contemplated, when the Department was created, that it should make a profit out of any business or matter connected with its functions in aid of agricultural development; and will he inquire whether any profits are made by the Department; and, if so, will he take steps to prevent such incidents in the future.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. BRYCE, Aberdeen, S.): The fact is as stated in the first part of the Question. It is not considered desirable to publish particulars of the prices paid and received by the Department in individual cases. I may, however, state that the Department have made no profit upon transactions in this branch of their work taken as a whole.

MR. JOHN O'CONNOR: Have they made a profit out of this transaction?

MR. BRYCE: If the hon. Member will allow me, I will speak to him privately.

MR. JOHN O'CONNOR: Is it the policy of the Department to make profits on these transactions?

MR. BRYCE: I think the Department is justified, if it makes a loss on one transaction, in recouping it on another.

Land Commissioners' Practice.

MR. GINNELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether, in view of the increasing number and urgency of complaints against the amounts of judicial rents, he will produce a specimen paper, illustrating the actual practice of the Land Commissioners and Sub-Commissioners, especially their treatment of improvements, the comparative scale of prices of farm produce and of labour in the particular district with which they are dealing during the preceding fifteen years, and the method of using the scale in ascertaining what the judicial rent ought to be.

MR. BRYCE: I am informed that the practice of the Land Commission and of the Sub-Commission Courts in fixing judicial rents, the treatment of improvements, and other matters referred to in the Question, is governed by the various Land Law Acts, the rules prescribed by those Acts, and the numerous judicial decisions interpreting the law as to the fixing of fair rents. The schedule attached to the order in each case, commonly called the pink schedule, gives the information the hon. Member requires as fully as it can be given. These schedules can be obtained in every case by either of the parties.

Mr. GINNELL: Can hon. Members have a copy of the rules and instructions issued to the Commissioners?

Mr. BRYCE: The regulations have already been laid on the Table and are available to hon. Members. There will be no difficulty about supplying copies of the instructions.

Irish Land Purchase Loans.

Mr. MURPHY (Kerry, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland what is the explanation of the fact that 3,812 loans for £1,459,530 were refused under the Land Purchase (Ireland) Acts, 1885 and 1888, under which loans for £9,992,536 were issued; that under the Acts of 1891 to 1896, 4,355 loans for £1,300,469 were refused, and £13,190,540 loans issued; while under the Land Act of 1903, under which £9,212,650 loans have been issued, the loans refused only number 61 for £25,371.

Mr. BRYCE: With reference to the number of applications refused under the earlier Acts, I beg to refer to my reply to a Question of the hon. Member for North Westmeath on Thursday last.† The Land Commissioners inform me that the number 61 applications for £25,371 mentioned in the latter part of the present Question, is, as will be seen from the Parliamentary Return of proceedings of the Irish Land Commission during the month of January, 1906, page 9, limited to applications for advances under the Act of 1903 made to the Land Commission other than the Estate Commissioners, which were refused, dismissed, or withdrawn for defects in title, irregularity, insufficiency of security or other causes. The total number of applications for advances under the Act of 1903 (including the refused applications referred to) made to the Land Commission other than the Estates Commissioners was 5,086 for £949,427. Apparently the figures £9,212,650 were quoted in the Question under a misapprehension. It would not be possible within the limits of an Answer to enter upon an explanation of these complicated statistics.

Mr. KILBRIDE: Is it not the fact that while advances were refused under former Land Purchase Acts because the inspectors held that the land was not sufficient security under the Act of 1903, although the prices had been raised by five or six years' purchase no refusals had taken place?

Mr. BRYCE: I ought to have notice of that Question. I may say the provisions of the new Act are rather different from those of the previous Act.

Irish Training Colleges.

Mr. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether, in view of the action of the Government in granting out of the Irish Development Grant a sum of £50,000 for buildings for the Government college in Marlborough Street, Dublin, he will secure fair treatment to the Belfast, Limerick, and Waterford training colleges by placing a sum for a free home grant on the same fund.

Mr. BRYCE: I went very fully into this matter in my reply to the hon. Member's Question of Thursday last. Without entering further into the question whether fair treatment has been accorded to the provincial colleges mentioned, it must, I fear, be said that (as I am advised) the Ireland Development Grant Fund is not at present in a condition to bear fresh charges of the nature suggested.

Mr. JOHN REDMOND: Is it a fact that fresh charges are being put on this fund while nothing is being put on for educational purposes?

Mr. BRYCE: Some have been put on and others taken off. Charges of different kinds are being constantly put on.

Queen's College, Belfast.

Mr. JOHN REDMOND: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he can state when and by whom, and to whom, was the promise made to provide further funds for Queen's College, Belfast; has any public statement of this promise been made; and whether his attention has been called to the statement made by the late Prime Minister, that it was absolutely impossible for him, with decency, to go to the House of Commons and say he wanted £3,000 or £4,000 a year more for Queen's College, Belfast; and to the further statement made by the same Gentleman on April 13th, 1905, that "one thing is certain, this House cannot provide the means; it is impossible for any Government or any Chief Secretary to come to this House and ask for additional funds for Queen's College, Belfast, while leaving wholly untouched the grievances which have been brought forward as to the condition of other educational institutions in Ireland."

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† See (4) *Debates*, cliii., 619.

Mr. McKENNA: In 1893 the Treasury refused to sanction certain new works at Belfast on the ground that "the time has now come when grants to the buildings of the Queen's colleges in Ireland should no longer be given unless efforts are made by the localities chiefly interested to meet the grant by Government by a substantial contribution from private sources." The present grant of £5,400 has been placed on the Estimates for 1906–7 in order to meet the local effort which has been made in accordance with this suggestion. I was not aware of the statements of the late Prime Minister to which the hon. Member refers; and the present Government cannot, of course, undertake any responsibility for them. But I think the right hon. Gentleman was probably referring to increases of the permanent endowments of the colleges, rather than to occasional grants for the erection or extension of buildings, such as Parliament has been accustomed to make for many years past whenever a case for assistance has been made out on behalf of any of the colleges.

Mr. JOHN REDMOND: Has the hon. Gentleman taken occasion to read the speech of the late Prime Minister, made on April 13th, 1905, in which he said it was impossible for any Government or any Parliamentary Secretary to come to this House and ask for additional funds for Queen's College, Belfast, while leaving wholly untouched the grievances of other institutions?

Mr. McKENNA: Since the hon. and learned Gentleman put down the Question I have referred to the speech of the right hon. Gentleman, and I am confirmed in the view that I take, that he was only referring to endowments and not grants for buildings, because since that time grants have been made for such buildings.

Mr. T. M. HEALY (Louth, N.): Are the present or the late Government responsible for the existing system?

Mr. McKENNA: The actual reckoning of part of the Estimates was made by the late Government, but the present Government is bound to accept the whole responsibility of the Estimates as they are actually presented to this House.

Mr. JOHN REDMOND: The hon. Gentleman has not answered the first part of my Question—by whom and to whom was this promise given?

Mr. McKENNA: I thought the hon. Gentleman would have interpreted the reply that there was not an actual promise, but an implied promise.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: The hon. Gentleman says he is not responsible for the pledges of the late Government contained in this Question. Is he responsible, or are the late Government responsible for promising this money?

Mr. McKENNA: The present Government is undoubtedly responsible for placing on the Estimates the sum of £5,400 for buildings for Belfast.

Mr. JOHN REDMOND: Has not the hon. Gentleman said that the reason they made this Estimate was that they felt bound to carry out the promise made last year by the late Government?

Mr. McKENNA: That is certainly true; but the Estimate, as a matter of fact, is presented to this House by the present Government.

Evicted Tenants on the Clanricarde Estate.

Mr. JOHN ROCHE (Galway, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the

Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state the number of evicted tenants at present upon the Clanricarde Estate; also the number reinstated since 1903; and what steps, if any, the Government propose to take towards the reinstatement of those who are still homeless.

MR. BRYCE: The Estates Commissioners have received 129 applications for reinstatement from evicted tenants on this estate, and three of these have been allotted farms on a neighbouring estate. As regards the remaining cases, the Commissioners intend to proceed in accordance with the Regulations recently issued.

MR. JOHN ROCHE: Can the right hon. Gentleman hold out no hope that these tenants will be reinstated?

MR. BRYCE: The Estates Commissioners are doing their best.

First-term Rents in Tipperary.

MR. CULLINAN (Tipperary, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the Land Commission, which recently adjudicated in Tipperary county, raised first-term rents in several cases; and whether, in view of the dissatisfaction caused thereby because of the fall in the prices of farm produce and increased cost of production since first-term rents were fixed, he will ask the Commissioners to explain on what basis they arrived at their decisions.

MR. BRYCE: The Land Commission inform me that the answer to the first inquiry is in the affirmative. During the past twelve months, 163 second-term rents were adjudicated upon in Sub-Commission Courts in this County. In 143 of these cases the first-term rents were reduced; in ten cases they were confirmed, and in ten cases they were raised. As I have already explained in other cases, the decisions of Sub-Commission Courts are judicial decisions, and the remedy for any dissatisfaction which may exist is to be found in the right of appeal provided by law. I may, however, add that, as I am informed, the prices of produce and the cost of production are considered by the Commissioners in arriving at their decision.

MR. CULLINAN: Will the right hon. Gentleman ask the Commissioners for the grounds of their decision?

MR. BRYCE: No, they are a judicial body, and I have no right to call on them to explain their decisions.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Is it intended to keep them in office as a judicial body after March 31st next?

[No answer was returned.]

Untenanted Lands.

MR. CULLINAN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware of the action adopted by many landlords of parceling out their untenanted lands, and disposing of their occupation interests, by public auction or private sale, to persons who are led to believe they can purchase such holdings under the Land Act of 1903; and whether, as the practice hampers the working of the said Act, by debarring the Estates Commissioners from purchasing those tracts of land for the purpose of distribution amongst the classes enumerated in Clause 2, and further provided in Clause 8, he will take steps to stop this system, secure the right of option to the Estates Commissioners to purchase such holdings, and save Clauses 2 and 8 from becoming inoperative.

MR. BRYCE: The Estates Commissioners inform me that they believe the practice in question has been resorted to in some cases, but that no specific case of the kind has so far been dealt with by them. If any such case should come before the Commissioners, they will have due regard to the provisions of the Act relative to parcels or newly created holdings.

Galway County Rate.

MR. CHARLES DEVLIN (Galway): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the county rate demanded of the city of Galway is nearly double what it was in previous years; that the increase is largely due to charges for extra police; and whether, in view of the order and peace that have always prevailed in Galway City, he will take steps to restrict in future the facility which the authorities have of obtaining extra police.

Mr. BRYCE: The Local Government Board have ascertained that the amounts of county rate demanded from the Galway Urban District Council for the past four years were £4,580, £5,910, £4,346, £4,431, respectively. The amount for the coming financial year is £6,695. This latter amount includes no charge for extra police. The increase in the demand for the coming year is stated to be caused by increased county charges, including asylum and union charges. I may, however, add that a demand for £557 in respect of extra police for last year is outstanding against nine districts in the county, of which the Galway Urban District is one. The amount payable by that district will, therefore, be comparatively small. The sanction of the Lord-Lieutenant is necessary before a charge can be imposed upon local authorities in respect of extra police, and the hon. Member may rely that no such charge will be made unless the circumstances of the case fully warrant it.

Galway Bay Breakwater.

Mr. CHARLES DEVLIN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he has recieved a copy of a resolution adopted by the Galway Urban District Council, calling attention to the negotiations during the viceroyalty of Lord Carnarvon for the construction of a breakwater between the mainland and Mutton Island, in Galway Bay, and the promises then made, pointing out also the urgent necessity for improvements, and praying the Government to proceed with these works of public utility; and, if so, what action will the Government take.

Mr. BRYCE: The project in question was bound up with a scheme for building a Convict Labour Prison in Galway, the intention being that the breakwater should be mainly constructed by convict labour. The scheme, however, was abandoned twenty years ago, and a convict prison at Maryborough has since been established. It is not the intention of the Government to revive the project.

Irish School Regulations.

Mr. FLYNN (Cork, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether managers and teachers of boys' national schools having the services of duly-qualified assistant teachers are at liberty to enrol pupils under seven years of age; and, as the Commissioners of National Education have given an undertaking to exclude such schools from the operation of Rule 127 (b), will he recommend the Board to allow the enrolment of pupils as if Rule 127 (b) did not exist.

Mr. BRYCE: I beg to refer the hon. Member to my reply to a somewhat similar Question put by the hon. Member for West Wicklow on Friday last.† The Commissioners of National Education inform me that boys under seven may be enrolled in a boys' school under a master where there is a qualified female assistant; and of course such boys may also be enrolled in a boys' infant school under a mistress. In the case of other schools for boys only, the terms of Rule 127 (b) are strictly enforced, subject to the exemptions set out in the rule.

In reply to a further Question Mr. Bryce said he would consider any statements which might be made as to the effect of this rule.

Irish Piers and Harbours.

Mr. JOHN O'CONNOR: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland what are the legal difficulties referred to in the Report of the Department of Agriculture for Ireland, at page 10 of the Fourth Annual General Report, 1903–4 [Cd. 2509], that prevent county authorities from taking advantage of the offers of the Department to render aid in the construction and improvement of piers and harbours in Ireland; are these difficulties removable by legislation or otherwise; and, if so, will an effort be made to remove them.

Mr. BRYCE: In the case of new marine works to be constructed by county councils the maximum sum which the council can contribute is limited by Sec. 67 of the Grand Jury Act of 1836 (as adapted by the Local Government Ireland Act 1898) to £300. As the section provides that the county can, within this limit, provide for only two-thirds the cost of any such work, it follows that the entire cost of a new work to be constructed by a county council under the section is limited to the sum of £450. This difficulty obviously precludes the Department from co-operating with county councils in many cases—such as those in which a larger local contribution should fairly be forthcoming, or where the entire expenditure on a work would exceed £450. The difficulty, I understand, can only be removed by legislation.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cliii., 775.

Rent Reductions in County Limerick.

MR. O'SHAUGHNESSY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, if he can say what is the average reduction in rents given by the Sub-Commissioners since the passing of the Land Act, 1903, in the county of Limerick; whether he is aware that dissatisfaction exists amongst the farmers with regard to their decisions; and what are the qualifications of Mr. Croasdale, who fixed such rents.

MR. BRYCE: The hon. Member will find full statistics as to the reduction of rents in the appendices to the Annual Reports of the Land Commission. The average will be gathered from these appendices more easily than from any Answer I could give here. The last such Report bears the number Cd. 2648, of 1905. Mr. Croasdale's qualifications are stated in Parliamentary Paper No. Cd. 151, of 1902.

MR. DELANY (Queen's County Ossory): Is not this gentleman's sole qualification for the post to be found in the fact that he is a landlord's son and a major in the militia?

MR. O'SHAUGHNESSY: Will the right hon. Gentleman inquire into the matter?

MR. BRYCE: The whole subject of the Assistant Commissioners will come before me when the new appointments have to be made.

Irish Fisheries.

MR. JOHN O'CONNOR: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, whether the Department of Agriculture for Ireland has taken notice of the new methods recently adopted by Norwegian fishermen for the catching and curing at sea of mackerel along the Irish coast; if so, whether the attention of Irish fishermen and merchants has been drawn to such new methods; and whether, seeing that the Irish trade in America in cured mackerel is endangered thereby, the Department will take all necessary steps to bring this industry up to date.

MR. BRYCE: I am informed by the Department that in June last one Norwegian crew came to cure mackerel on the Irish coast, and that the method adopted by the Norwegians was the same as that pursued by the Irish. For over ten years the Norwegians have sent a special class of mackerel, caught on lines and cured at once, to the American market. These consignments were small, and fetched high prices; but the treatment of the fish in such cases is not applicable where large quantities have to be dealt with. The Congested Districts Board have had a Norwegian instructor, expert in this class of curing, on the west coast of Ireland for two years.

Income-Tax on Irish Land Purchase Agreement.

MR. COGAN (Wicklow, E.): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether a landlord who has entered into an agreement with his tenants for the sale of their holdings under The Land Purchase Act, 1903, and who is receiving interest on the full amount of the purchase price from the tenants until such time as the capital sum may be advanced by the Land Commission, is liable for income-tax under Schedule A; and whether tenants who have paid such income-tax to the collectors thereof will be recouped the amount by the Land Commission pending the completion of the sale.

MR. MCKENNA: A landlord is liable for income-tax under Schedule A on the annual value of his lands. In the case of sales through the Land Commission, it is the practice of the Inland Revenue Department to accept from the date of the signing of the agreement—the tax on the amount of interest, in lieu of rent payable by the purchaser, in satisfaction of the landlord's liability. It is only in special cases that income-tax could, in such circumstances, be collected from a tenant. But, if it should be so collected, the tenant would be entitled to re-imbursement of the tax paid in respect of the amount payable to the landlord as interest.

MR. O'SHAUGHNESSY asked what were the special cases in which the income-tax could be collected from the tenant.

MR. McKENNA asked for notice of the Question.

Galway Post Office.

MR. CHARLES DEVLIN: I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether he can state what action was taken with regard to the petition presented in February 1905 by the staff of the Galway post office, bearing upon the treatment of the staff, the scale of wages, promotions, and appointments; what was the nature of the Answer sent; and, if none, will he say why.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: In connection with this and other memorials asking for a higher maximum of pay, the Department has found it necessary to make detailed inquiries which are not yet completed. Meanwhile no Answer could be given to the Memorialists. The pay of sorting clerks and telegraphists will doubtless be considered by the Select Committee, and I do not therefore propose to deal with individual cases at present. I have recently sanctioned an improvement in the pay of the learners at Galway and elsewhere.

Keelnabrack (Kerry) National School.

MR. BOLAND (Kerry, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether he is aware that the delay in publishing the new plans for national schools in Ireland is causing dissatisfaction in Ireland; that, in the case of the school at Keelnabrack, Glenbeigh, County Kerry, the National Board now expect the manager to provide additional space for the girls school; and whether, seeing that it is now more than three years since the manager applied for a grant for a new school, and that the publication of the new plans has been delayed for that period, he will state what action he intends to take; and whether the delay in coming to a decision is caused by the Treasury, the National Board or the Irish Government.

MR. McKENNA: As to the general Question I must refer the hon. Member to the Answer I gave to him on the 27th February†. The needs of the school at Keelnabrack, which cannot be described as specially urgent, will be dealt with in the general settlement.

South African Constitution.

MR. WALROND (Devonshire, Tiverton): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury on what general lines the constitution of the Upper Houses in the Transvaal and Orange River Colony will be established.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN, Stirling Burghs): I have no statement to make on this subject.

MR. WALROND: When will the Prime Minister be able to furnish the House with the information I have asked for?

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I cannot say. The hon. Gentleman seems to know more about it than I do, for he speaks of the Upper Houses of those two Colonies. I have no knowledge whether there will be Upper Houses or not.

Fiction and Foreign Relations.

*MR. LEHMANN (Leicestershire, Market Harborough): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury a Question, of which I have given him private notice—namely, whether his attention has been called to an advertisement appearing in the morning papers entitled "The Invasion of 1910," and whether the Government can take any steps or express any opinion which will discourage the publication of matter of this sort, calculated to prejudice our relations with other Powers.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I was greatly surprised to see the publication to which my hon. friend has referred appearing in some newspapers, even in newspapers of which but a few years ago we were all proud. I do not know what step the Government can take in the matter; I am afraid they can do nothing. We can safely leave it, I think, to be judged by the good sense and good taste of the British people.

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† See (4) *Debates*, clii., 1028.

THE ORDER OF QUESTIONS.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.) asked the Speaker for an assurance that he was in absolute control of Questions, and that, if he saw that by the system of grouping anything like injustice was done to any one section of Members, he would see that that injustice was remedied, and that Questions were put down in such a way as to give a fair chance to every Member of the House; also, would he see that Questions were put down in their proper place, so as to give a fair chance to everyone?

*MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member has endeavoured to invest me with a great many powers which I am certainly not anxious to take upon myself. I will endeavour to do my best to prevent injustice from being done to any private Member or any member of the Government. If any arrangement is come to by the different sections of the House, of course it is my duty to try to carry it out.

One other Member took and subscribed the Oath.

LABOUR PENSIONS BILL.

Order for Second Reading To-morrow read, and discharged. Bill withdrawn.

PREVENTION OF CORRUPTION BILL [LORDS].

Read the first time; to be read a second time upon Thursday, and to be printed. [Bill 96.]

NEW BILLS.

EDUCATION AUTHORITIES (ACCESS TO BOOKS AND DOCUMENTS) BILL.

"To enable ratepayers to inspect the Books and Documents of Local Education Authorities," presented by Dr. Macnamara; supported by Mr. Winfrey, Mr. Cremer, Mr. Crooks, Mr. Thornton, Mr. Massie, Mr. Ellis Griffith, Mr. Ramsay Macdonald, Mr. Bridgeman. To be read a second time upon Thursday, 22nd March, and to be printed. [Bill 97.]

MARKET GARDENERS' COMPENSATION BILL.

"To remove certain doubts as to the meaning of the Market Gardeners' Compensation Act, 1895." Presented by Colonel Long, supported by Mr. Lee, Mr. Channing, and Sir Thomas Esmonde. To be read a second time upon Thursday, 22nd March, and to be printed. [Bill 98.]

LOCAL REGISTRATION OF TITLE (IRELAND) BILL.

"To make provision with respect to the application of the Local Registration of Title (Ireland) Act, 1891, to the county of Cork." Presented by Mr. Attorney-General for Ireland. To be read a second time to-morrow, and to be printed. [Bill 99.]

OLD-AGE PENSIONS BILL.

Order for Second Reading upon Friday, 25th May, read, and discharged. Bill withdrawn.

AGED PENSIONERS BILL.

Order for Second Reading upon Friday, 25th May, read, and discharged. Bill withdrawn.

SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES).

SIR WILLIAM BRAMPTON GURDON reported from the Committee of Selection: That they had nominated the following Fifteen Members to serve on the Standing Committee on Trade (including Agriculture and Fishing), Shipping, and Manufactures, in respect of the Land Tenure Bill. Mr. Agar-Robartes, Mr. Soares, Sir John Dickson-Poynder, Viscount Helmsley, Mr. Hicks Beach, Colonel Kenyon-Slaney, Mr. Hay Morgan, Mr. Montagu, Mr. Munro Ferguson, Mr. J. F. Mason, Mr. Lloyd Morgan, Mr. Newnes, Mr. Nicholls, Viscount Turnour, and Mr. Luke White.

Report to lie upon the Table.

STANDING COMMITTEES (CHAIRMEN'S PANEL).

Mr. STUART WORTLEY reported from the Chairmen's Panel: That they had appointed Sir James Wodehouse to act as Chairman of the Standing Committee for the consideration of Bills relating to

Law, and Courts of Justice, and Legal Procedure; and Mr. Stuart Wortley to act as Chairman of the Standing Committee for the consideration of Bills relating to Trade (including Agriculture and Fishing), Shipping, and Manufactures, in respect to the Notice of Accidents Bill; and Sir Thomas Esmonde to act as Chairman of the Standing Committee on Trade (including Agriculture and Fishing), Shipping, and Mrnufactures, in respect to the Land Tenure Bill.

Mr. STUART WORTLEY further reported from the Chairmen's Panel; That they had agreed to the following resolution:—That any Member of the Chairmen's Panel be and he is hereby empowered to ask any other Member of the Chairmen's Panel to take his place in case of necessity.

Reports to lie upon the Table.

STANDING ORDERS.

Resolutions reported from the Select Committee:

1. "That, in the case of the London County Council (Tramways and Improvements), Petition for Bill, the Standing Orders ought to be dispensed with:—That the parties be permitted to proceed with their Bill, provided that the powers to construct Tramways Nos. 4, 5, 6, 6A, 7, 7A, 7B, 7C, 8, 8A, 9, 17, 17A, 17B, 17C, and 20 be struck out of the Bill:—That the Committee on the Bill do report how for such Order has been complied with."

2. "That, in the case of the Middlesex County Council (Tramways), Petition for Bill, the Standing Orders ought to be dispensed with:—That the parties be permitted to proceed with their Bill."

3. "That, in the case of the London County Council (General Powers) Bill, Petition for dispensing with Standing Order 128 in the case of the Petition of 'Electrical Contractors' Association and others,' against the Bill, the said Standing Orders ought not to be dispensed with."

First Two Resolutions agreed to.

Report to lie upon the Table.

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

That they have passed a Bill, intituled, "An Act to codify the Law relating to Marine Insurance." [Marine Insurance Bill [Lords.] And, also a Bill, intituled, "An Act for the better Prevention of Corruption." [Prevention of Corruption Bill [Lords.]

MARINE INSURANCE BILL [LORDS].

Read the first time; to be read a Second Time upon Thursday, and to be printed. [Bill 95.]

FREE TRADE.

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [12th March], "That this House, recognising that in the recent General Election the people of the United Kingdom have demonstrated their unqualified fidelity to the principles and practice of free trade, deems it right to record its determination to resist any proposal, whether by way of taxation upon foreign corn or of the creation of a general tariff upon foreign goods, to create in this country a system of protection."—(*Sir James Kitson.*)

Question again proposed.

Debate resumed.

*Mr. STUART WORTLEY (Sheffield, Hallam) said they had often before noticed the kind of foredoomed misdirection of energy with which Liberal Ministries, newly returned to power with large majorities, full of high hopes and charged with serious mandates and drastic missions, had been found in good time expending their force and wasting precious days in debating purely academic reforms and even in purely theoretical discussions. Those Members who had heard the flowers of rhetoric which escaped the Prime Minister the previous night were not surprised to find those obsessions and vicious propensities still in full force. They did not therefore so very greatly wonder why this Motion had been brought on. Of course a precedent had to be sought for, and they were told that it was to be found in Sir Charles Villiers' Motion in 1852. Was that a precedent at all? He did not think it was a very convenient precedent for the mover of the Resolution, for, against him there were some significant differences between the two cases, differences which he might describe as of a highly ill-omened character. The Villiers' Motion was brought in because, in the first instance, there was a real doubt in the mind of the public as to the attitude of the new House of Commons toward fiscal and economic questions. The House might remember that in that House there were 325 Liberals and 299 Conservatives, and that neither the Liberals nor the Conservatives possessed the necessary 327 votes to give them a majority. Consequently, the forty Peelites held the balance between the two parties. The second difference was in the Queen's Speech. In that year the Queen, advised by Lord Derby's Ministry, used words in the Speech about free trade, which were complained of as evasive and even as disrespectful to the House of Commons. Thirdly, the Motion, far from being engineered and inspired by Ministers, was directed against Ministers and intended as a censure upon them. Another fact concerning Mr. Villiers' Motion was that it was not carried. On the contrary, it was defeated by eighty votes, which was a larger majority than that of Conservatives and Peelites over Liberals, and even of any combination of Liberals with Peelites. Mr. Gladstone himself voted against it. It was defeated, and there was substituted the Resolution which was moved by Lord Palmerston, accepted by Mr. Disraeli and supported by Mr. Gladstone, and which purposely omitted the words "wise, just and beneficial" which the Villier's Motion had applied to the measures known as Corn Law Repeal. Further, by the use of the word "mainly" in a subsequent sentence it purposely refused to recognise unrestricted competition as the sole cause of the improved state of the country, and implied the belief that there were other contributing causes. He might mention also that three days were considered not too much to give to the debate on the subject; and yet they were now told that two days were too much to give to such a subject at this period of the session. On the other hand, in the present case they were given to understand that nothing was more free from doubt than the fiscal views of the Parliament of 1906. They saw for themselves that there were certainly no evasions and nothing disrespectful to the House of Commons in any part of the Speech His Majesty had been advised to deliver. They saw also that the Motion was really moved for the purpose of showing how large a majority the present Ministry commanded in the House, and of course it was not moved as a vote of censure on the Government, but was moved by a much honoured supporter of theirs; it was moved at the instance of the Ministers themselves. These things by themselves marked a good deal of difference between the two cases. But there was something more to which he would ask the attention of the House, something connected more closely with the Amendment which he had to move. Mr. Villiers, when he drew up his Motion, did not by any parenthetical or participial recitals seek to attribute any particular interpretation to the verdict then recently given by the electors of the country. Unlike Mr. Villiers, the hon. Baronet started by postulating that the electors had said a certain thing. He doubted whether the hon. Baronet was better advised than Mr. Villiers in making his preliminary assumption. Mr. Villiers was well advised in not asking the House to do more than to say something for itself, but the hon. Baronet asked the House to say that somebody else had said something. Surely anyone could see that what the electors had said could not be affected by anything that the hon. Baronet might move, or that, after the event, this House might resolve. Thus the hon. Baronet had put in the forefront of his Motion that which clearly distinguished it from that of Mr. Villiers. Those for whom he was speaking not only held that his objectionable recital ought not to have been propounded to them at all, but they objected to being asked, even in a subordinate sentence, to affirm its truth. They found it a very disputable thing to affirm either that the electors did say any one thing as to fiscal policy, or that that one thing was describable by the term free trade. In spite of his dubious preamble, there was, nevertheless, evidence that the hon. Baronet had been aided by some artful advisers in the framing of his Motion, at least as regarded its later and more strictly operative part. Desiring to reduce as much as possible the number of dissentients, he had carefully limited the class of proposals that he asked the House to condemn. He did not condemn all general tariffs, nor yet all taxation of corn; but only such general tariffs and such taxation of corn as were to be the means of "creating in this country a system of protection." So far, the hon. Baronet might have had a chance of carrying with him those Members who might favour a small duty on foreign corn as a means, not to protection, but to some other end. But he had gone further, and had sought to commit the House to a question-begging paragraph, both as to what the late elections meant and as to what free trade meant. Now, though he might agree with the hon. Baronet in condemning measures designed to create in this country a system of protection, he, for one, was not going to be thereby swept into his net along with those who were ready to swallow this ingenious and unhistorical recital. He called it an unhistorical recital for many reasons, but chiefly because he considered that besides free trade and fiscal policy, there were many contributing causes to the result of the late elections. He should like to ask any gentleman who returned now to his constituents what sort of a reception he would get if he were to say that his appeals in reference to "slavery" in regard to the employment of the yellow man in the mines in South Africa had nothing to do with his success. They all knew that in the late election there was enlisted upon the side of Ministerial candidates that extremely powerful force which was best described as fully mobilised political nonconformists upon the war path. They had those earnest, almost fanatical, men working their hardest for them in the cause of education and possibly also of temperance. The men we knew, the cause we knew, but the tools were Chinese labour, trade disputes, even the Post Office Vote, expenditure, inefficiency, and some rash promises of economy. He did not speak without some texts. There were some very distinguished Gentlemen sitting opposite who took up the position that these were contributing causes. The Minister of Education at Halifax, on February 10th, said that in the election—

> "Education formed the fiercest battle cry."

Again, the same right hon. Gentleman, who had had so much to do with the education of the electorate, said that no one

> "seems to have realised the extraordinary unpopularity in all parts of the country of the introduction of labour from the Far East into one of our Colonies. Then in the second place, there was the fiscal question. Thank Heaven they would not talk about the fiscal question in the new Parliament."

Then there was the Financial Secretary to the Treasury, speaking at Six Bells, on January 25th; he said—

> "The country was declaring with no uncertain voice in favour of cheap food, against the Education Act, the Licensing Act, and Chinese labour, and in favour of efficiency of administration and economy in expenditure."

The Member for Huddersfield, a representative private Member much trusted by His Majesty's Ministers, attributed the result primarily to reckless and wasteful expenditure, and, secondly, to free trade. Then he came to the hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor-General. He said, at Cambridge, on February 8th, that if the Liberal Party had any mandate it was that the question of Chinese labour should be justly and faithfully dealt with. Lastly, he came to the chairman of the Labour Party, the hon. Member for Merthyr Tydvil, who, in a moment of rather natural disappointment after a deputation to the new Ministers, said that—

> "Probably not 10 per cent. of the Liberal Members won their seats without making more or less definite promises in regard to old-age pensions."

Then there was the general depravity theory. The Under-Secretary for India had expressed it, and the Prime Minister seemed to have been possessed by the idea. He said—

> "The swing of the pendulum, they say! Why, it was a revolt. It was a great uprising against a doctrine."

The general depravity of the late Ministry.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN, Stirling Burghs): Did I use the word "depravity"?

*MR. STUART WORTLEY: No. It is my descriptive term, to which I adhere. Proceeding, he said the right hon. Gentleman said—

> "It was a great uprising against a practice in public life, a method of government abhorrent to the conscience and the heart of the nation."

He thought that was rather more than depravity.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Different.

*MR. STUART WORTLEY: Different and worse. Then, he continued, the right hon. Gentleman said—

> As a by-product of the general election we have given protection its quietus for the time, at all events."

Even if they had none of these causes, they would still have had the striking fact that in many places—he ought to say most places—the only arguments used as to fiscal policy by opponents of fiscal reform were really arguments against a fiscal policy that no one had proposed at all. In most, possibly in all places, the only thing that he could say for sure as to the local verdict on fiscal matters was that the people were frightened at the prospect of dear bread, and registered at the poll their determination not to be carried back to the "starving forties." To say that they did not want to go back to the "starving forties," is not the same thing as saying that they would never change any, even the smallest, detail in our fiscal system. Still less could they say that to cling to our present system, and to refuse to lift a finger to untax our exports, was to advocate free trade. Our present system was not free trade. Hon. Gentlemen opposite when they described themselves as free traders misdescribed themselves. It was very difficult to find a simple phrase to describe a lop-sided thing, and he would defy any man to find any description, if it were true and exhaustive, in shorter words than "unreciprocated free imports." Thus it was that the preamble drove away from the hon. Baronet's respectable and even unexceptionable operative words about "creating a system of protection," adherents who might have been attracted. But there was a further reason why he wished to relieve the hon. Baronet of the embarrassment that he had created for himself. His preamble prejudiced the position and tied the hands of the Ministry in whose interest he was moving. In the election of 1900, and afterwards, they were told that because South African affairs were the chief issue they were also the only issue, and that they were thereby debarred from embarking on legislative enterprise almost of any kind, and certainly of the kind that touched such things as education, help to church schools, temperance, and fair play to traders not guilty of any offence. That was what was said by supporters of the present Ministry about the electoral verdict of that day, and he would warn hon. Gentlemen opposite to be careful lest the anti-Unionist reasoning of 1900 was applied to them. They were setting up that fiscal reform was the chief issue at the late election, and it might be argued that it was the only issue. It was in any case not a very progressive ideal, this watching over the immovability of idols. Vigilance might be a great virtue, but vigilance to prevent any, even the smallest change, was not exactly salvation. If these Thibetan or Llama-like duties were to be said to be their chief functions, let him warn them, lest by the anti-Unionist reasoning of 1900 they came to be called also their only functions, lest their education, local option, trade union reform, liberationist and disunionist policies, and all the "isms" and fads for which they claimed popular authority, turned out to be not only the less-wanted policies of sections and mere minorities, but even the not-at-all wanted policies, and disliked really by the people at large. With due respect to the hon. Baronet opposite, he had ventured to put down the Amendment in the hope of doing him a service. He moved it for the purpose of correcting his deviation from precedent, of helping him towards greater unanimity in the reception of his proposals, of removing a needless embarrassment from the path of the Ministers in whose following he held so distinguished and trusted a place, and, possibly, of doing thereby something to save the time of the House. He begged to move.

Amendment proposed—

> "In line 1, to leave out from the word 'House,' to the word 'deems,' in line 4."—(*Mr. Stuart Wortley.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

MR. PAUL (Northampton) said the right hon. Gentleman's speech was not less interesting or ingenious than his Amendment. Although the Amendment did not object to condemning protection, it did object to praising free trade. The right hon. Gentleman's speech, on the success of which he congratulated him, was a highly skilful attempt to steer clear through the channel of no meaning between the Scylla and Charybdis of aye and no. He was painfully unconscious of his inability to speak on this subject with the qualifications of his hon. friend the Member for the Colne Valley, for he was not a man of business. He had indeed one negative qualification which would go far to redeem himself, if he were not past redemption in the eyes of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham. He was not, except by a legal fiction, a lawyer. He might be asked why he took part in that debate. He was peculiarly situated. It had been stated that a great many questions were submitted to the constituencies at the general election. However, the gentlemen of the Conservative persuasion who opposed him and his hon. colleague at Northampton fought on tariff reform, and that alone. There were also two candidates of the school of the hon. Member for Blackburn, there were six of them in all. Perhaps hon. Members opposite would say the scum always rose to the top. At all events, there he was, perhaps the worst representative of bald Cobdenism in its least attractive form which the House possessed. He comforted himself with the reflection that arguments were equally good, whoever used them, and that this House would give them a patient hearing from whatever quarter they proceeded. There was one argument—the numerical argument—which he would not use. It was not very logical or very well bred to say "we are more than you." Majorities were not infallible or everlasting. If the sentiment conveyed to the minds of hon. Gentlemen on the Opposition side any information which they did not previously possess, he made them heartily welcome to it. He had an incorrigible sympathy with minorities. He belonged to a small, harassed, ostracised minority, whose very existence was described as an intolerable strain upon the feelings of our fellow countrymen. He was one of those people still called in the idiom of an aristocratic centre as Pro-Boers. Englishmen never knew when they were beaten, therefore they were never beaten at all, and he was ready to believe that when tariff reform had been buried in the grave of bimetallism the Conservative Party would again be a great power in the land. He had no sympathy with recent attempts to improve the Sermon on the Mount. He stood in humble reverence by the original version, and he doubted whether it was a standard which they had any right to apply in this House.

Mr. LAMBTON (Durham, S.E.): I wish to ask, Mr. Speaker, is the hon. Gentleman speaking to the Amendment?

***Mr. SPEAKER**: I see no reason to interfere.

Mr. PAUL said that they of the rank and file who lived in the world had better keep these sacred maxims not for condemning or judging others but for judging and condemning themselves. For a purely mundane reason he doubted the adaptability of the golden rule. He was not at all sure that it would be for our advantage that other countries should adopt the principle of free trade. Some of the principal manufacturers in Northampton had told him that it was free trade and free trade alone which would enable them to drive the American boot out of the market. He asked what would happen if the United States adopted free trade with all the world. Well, they were Englishmen, and would not admit that they would be beaten; but they said that the struggle would be very fierce, profits would be diminished, hours of labour lengthened, and wages decreased. Cobden had been called a false prophet. He believed there had not been a true prophet since the days of Cassandra, who was in the first place an avowed pessimist, and in the second place an inspired female. He yielded to none in his ignorance of the future, but it seemed strange to him that for one who could tell him what happened fifty years ago there were ten who would tell him what would happen fifty years hence. But Cobden did rest his policy not upon prophecy, but upon reason and experience. He spoke with diffidence, because the Secretary of State for India was not present to confirm what he said, but his belief was that Mr. Cobden desired that other countries should adopt free trade, not for the sake of this country, but for the sake of their own. Cobden was called an international man.

He was not only a sincere patriot; he was an ardent philanthropist. So was Mr. Gladstone. He believed Mr. Gladstone considered it positively wrong, absolutely sinful, that we should derive advantage from the foolish system of bounties upon sugar given by foreign Governments, without remonstrating and expostulating with them on the error of their ways.

*MR. SPEAKER: I would remind the hon. Gentleman that the Amendment having been moved, the debate must be now restricted to a discussion of what occurred at the last general election.

MR. PAUL said he would implicitly obey the ruling, but he was trying to prove that what determined the general election was free trade, and he thought he might be allowed for that purpose to show in what sense he used a term variously interpreted by different persons. According to his understanding of it, the Sugar Convention had prevented us from enjoying one of the great advantages of free trade, which was to profit by the economic errors of our neighbours, and he could not rise to the level of Mr. Gladstone and Mr. Cobden. He thought we were sensible in taking what we could get by the follies of other countries, and that we were very foolish to deprive ourselves by the Convention of such advantages. Cobden always laid great stress upon foreign nations following our example, but he (Mr. Paul) never did. He always said that if free trade was a good thing for God's sake let us keep it to ourselves. Mr. Villiers knew that free trade in the explicit language of economic science meant a tariff for revenue only, a policy necessarily one-sided, an English policy adopted by Englishmen for the benefit of England, and without regard to the necessities or circumstances of any other country upon earth. When he heard the ingenious speech of the hon. Member for the City of London last night, and when he read with the greatest intellectual pleasure his complicated, elaborate, and sophisticated proofs that protectionists had never understood the meaning of protection and that free traders had never understood the meaning of free trade, his wandering fancy strayed to the convivial orator who began, and he supposed ended, his speech after dinner with the words—

> "I perceive that this company is drunk."

He wished to congratulate the Leader of the Opposition upon his return, for he had grateful recollections of his personal kindness when he had the honour of sitting in this House many years ago. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham had a famous formula which played a great part in the election, and it was—

> "We have not free trade, we have only free imports."

That was, he believed, what was called an epigram, and it was very witty and brilliant, but it contained two misstatements. We had a free trade tariff for revenue, but we had not free imports. Tea, sugar, tobacco and wine were taxed. Did the right hon. Gentlemen the Member for West Birmingham drink foreign wine? Did he smoke British cigars? Did he think, like Mr. Seddon, that the gold with which they paid foreign countries was produced in this country? A good deal was said in the course of the debate on the Address about placards and posters, but physical infirmities had made him inaccessible to the charms of mural literature. He did think, however, that he could see a picture, and he had carefully studied all the political cartoons in the windows of Northampton, not for identification but for artistic criticism, with the result that he walked with cheerful confidence into the wrong Committee room, totally unable to distinguish any difference between the advertised pictorial policy of the Free Trade League, the Tariff Reform League, and the Social Democratic Federation. He was received with boisterous enthusiasm as the biggest fool out, but he was afterwards told that he was the biggest fool in. Then "there was the pinch of hunger" argument. Sometimes he regretted that the Prime Minister gave authority to that statement about there being 13,000,000 people suffering from hunger, because it rested upon insufficient evidence. It rested upon the examination made in the cathedral City of York, and it appeared in an election book published by the Rowntrees. He thought it was exceedingly rash to make such very large deductions from it as had been made by the right hon. Gentleman. But whether the Prime Minister was right or wrong, he had never been allowed to forget that admission. Free trade was not a panacea; it would not prevent death; it would not cure the toothache; and it had no direct influence upon that portion of our industry that was confined within the limits of our United Kingdom. Tariffs had no direct influence upon home trade. [OPPOSITION cries of "Oh, oh."] He was aware that the hon. Member for Central Sheffield contended that foreign tariffs had a great influence upon foreign trades, but that was quite another matter. They had heard from the President of the Local Government Board that the most depressed trade of all was the building trade, with which foreign tariffs had nothing whatever to do. Foreign trade was, of course, affected by tariffs. Two of the issues which were brought most prominently before the country at the last election were retaliation and preference. The retaliationist was like Falstaff, not only witty in himself, but the cause of wit in other men. Retaliation had been described by the Home Secretary as a weapon with a blunt point and a sharp handle. Retaliation drove even Mr. Gladstone into humour, because he said that the doctrine of the retaliationists was that " because a man smites you on one cheek you are to smite yourself on the other." What was preference? Preference was taxing the people of this country for the benefit of colonial manufacturers. What was this country going to get out of it? Their colonial fellow-subjects were frank and straightforward as they were loyal and patriotic, and they did not profess that they would lower their duties on British goods, although they said that they would raise their duties upon foreign goods. He often thought that an abstract argument was none the worse for a homely illustration. When he was first in Rome there had been some little difference of opinion between His Holiness the Pope and His Majesty the King. The result was that a notice was posted that the Vatican galleries were closed to the public, and especially to officers of the Italian Army. The House would observe that not being an Italian officer he was the subject of a preference, but he could not make out what benefit the special exclusion of Italian officers was to him. Any words he could use would be inadequate to express his sense of the consideration which he had received from hon. Gentlemen opposite while stating his opinions. He presumed it must be because they believed in the sincerity of his convictions just as he believed in the sincerity of theirs. A great man, the latchet of whose shoe he was unworthy to loose, did not shrink from elucidating truth by analogy and even by inuendo. There was an old Horatian tag which the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Dover knew well. Ah! these tags. The clever boy scanned and construed them and thought what a sharp fellow he was. The dull boy boldly maintained that the ancients could not talk sense, and wanted to know why he should be required to learn such stuff. When the boy left college he put away Homer and Theocritus, Horace and Virgil, hoping that he would never open them again; he adopted the popular superstition that Greek and Latin were dead languages, but it would not do. He had been in Arcadia, and some day or other when enjoying or enduring the experiences of life, and when he had gained some knowledge of the world, there came back to him, as in a flash of revelation, some phrase, some line, some part of a line, which he never fully understood before, and then he knew why it had survived the fall of empires and the wreck of creeds. His tag was a very simple one—*Ridentem dicere verum, quid vetat.* So said a wise Roman poet more that 1900 years ago. So, perhaps, a humble politician, *Divisus toto arbe Brittannus* might venture on his own behalf to plead before this House to-day.

*SIR FRANCIS LOWE (Birmingham, Edgbaston) said they had all no doubt been greatly interested in the personal reminiscences and anecdotal history of the hon. Member for Northampton, but he could not see that he (the hon. Member) had contributed very much to the illumination of the question now before the House. The hon. Member had said, speaking in the House a few nights ago, that the seven Members for Birmingham were returned against sense, but he thought the electors of Northampton must be the senseless people, because the hon. Member now said that they had returned him as an opponent of tariff reform, whereas everybody knew that the staple industry of Northampton was the manufacture of boots and shoes, and it was obvious that they should have some protection against the unfair competition of Americans who were constantly flooding our markets with cheap boots and shoes. It had been demonstrated over and over again in the course of this debate that the statements in the Resolution moved by the hon. Member for the Colne Valley Division were not only inaccurate and misleading, but that most of them were capable of several interpretations. In supporting the Amendment he could not expect to gain much sympathy from hon. Gentlemen opposite, because the attitude they had adopted towards this question during the election was just as severe and uncompromising as that which they took up with regard to Chinese labour, and they showed by their conduct that if any lay figure, even one of their own Chinese coolies in manacles, were dressed up and called free trade, they would vote in favour of it. Since the election, however, hon. Members opposite had somewhat altered their opinion with regard to the question of Chinese labour, and they had compromised with themselves upon that matter, might it not be hoped that they would do the same with regard to free trade? Now that the election was over and there was no further necessity for them to make Party capital out of it, he asked them to banish from their minds, if for one night only, the merely Party aspect of this question. The Members of the Opposition distinctly stated at nearly every meeting they addressed during the elections that they were in favour of free trade and opposed to protection; and therefore for hon. Members opposite to state—had been stating for the last two years and as they wished to affirm in the Resolution—that they desired to abolish free trade and set up a system of protectection showed at all events one thing if it shows nothing more serious and regrettable, namely, that there was a misunderstanding either real or assumed as to the meaning which ought to be attached to these somewhat high sounding phrases. If they were to engage in an argument on any subject with any chance of coming to a just and sound conclusion, it was essential to have a clear definition of the terms to be used. But that was exactly what they had never had with regard to the much-vexed question of tariff reform, or with regard to this Resolution. The result had been that hon. Gentlemen opposite had used the term free trade in a sense in which they had no right to use it and which did not at all accurately represent the system of trade which existed in this country. In the first place, they said that our present system of trade, erroneously called free trade, did not allow us to put any taxes on goods imported from abroad, and that it was especially subversive of that system to put a tax upon any articles of food. But the Leader of the Opposition brought forward several instances yesterday to show that we did already put taxes on a great many articles imported from abroad.

*MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Gentleman is discussing another question from that raised by the Amendment. He must try to confine himself to the preamble of the Resolution.

*SIR FRANCIS LOWE said he was endeavouring to show the sense in which the expression free trade was used during the late election. He was going to try to show that the wording of the Resolution was not accurate. We were at present raising as much as £15,000,000 a year by taxation on imported articles of food alone. He would give two illustrations. Leaving out of account the assistance which foreign manufacturers might receive in the way of bounties everybody knew that they had a much larger free market in which to dispose of their goods without having to pay duty upon them which we had to do, and consequently they were able to produce a much larger quantity of goods than they required for their own consumption, and to sell off their surplus production in our markets, amongst others, at considerably below cost price. It might be a great advantage to us to be able to buy these goods cheap so long as it lasted; but it did not, as a rule, last very long; and, as soon as these foreign traders got control of our markets and secured a monopoly, the prices were immediately raised. On the other hand, it might be a great disadvantage to us for our trades to be ruined, and working men thrown out of employment by this unfair competition from abroad. Whichever way it was taken, it was an entire misnomer to call it free trade according to the definition of the political economists. His second example was this, if our traders and manufacturers were to dispose of their goods in foreign markets at a remunerative price, they must charge a price which would not only recoup them for their outlay and yield them a fair percentage of profit, but they must, in addition, charge a further sum to defray the heavy duties, sometimes amounting to 100 or 150 per cent. which they were forced to pay before they could gain admission to these markets. He would not now discuss the question as to the extent to which the producer or the consumer was called upon to bear the burden of these duties. Hon. Gentlemen opposite said that in the case of the export duty on coal it was the producer who paid, but when it suited their purpose they alleged that it was the consumer who had to bear this burden. But his point was that whoever had to bear the burden of this duty it meant that the price of goods was artificially raised, and, therefore, they were not interchanged at their natural and legitimate price, and their interchange could form no part of a system of free trade properly so called. Therefore, he maintained that if the electors at the last election demonstrated their unqualified fidelity to the principles of free trade, they declared themselves in favour of an alteration rather than an adhesion to the present position. And the jury of public opinion having been misdirected as to what free trade really was, they were entitled to ask for a new trial. Then they were asked to resist any proposal, whether by way of taxation on foreign corn or a general tariff on foreign foods, which would tend to set up or create a system of protection in this country. But would it not be as well to wait before taking that course until some one had really proposed that we should put protective duties on foreign corn or foreign goods. Here again they came to a question of definitions, and it entirely depended upon what was meant by protective duties. He had heard many speeches and had read many papers and pamphlets on this subject of tariff reform, but he had never heard or read of any one, except his hon. and gallant friend the Member for Central Sheffield, advocating the imposition of protective duties on these foreign commodities. Like the hon. Member for the Walton Division of Liverpool, he confessed himself to be an unrepentant tariff reformer, and tariff reformers thought that a more equal system of trade with foreign countries should be brought about and that we should have a closer commercial union with the Colonies. If in order to accomplish these ends, which all must admit were most desirable in themselves, it should be found to be necessary to make use of either temporary retaliatory duties or permanent revenue duties, they should not allow any old-fashioned prejudices to stand in the way of their doing so. He would like to ask hon. Gentlemen opposite if, in their opinion, these temporary retaliatory duties, or permanent revenue duties could be described——

*MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member is anticipating an Amendment on the Paper. The only question now under discussion is what was the action at the last election?

*SIR FRANCIS LOWE said that he was endeavouring to put forth the view of tariff reformers at the last election; and if he could show that that view was different from that which was held by hon. Gentlemen opposite, then a different opinion ought to be accepted as to the verdict passed at the general election. If hon. Gentlemen would refer to Adam Smith and other great authorities on political economy, they would find it laid down that neither retaliatory nor revenue duties could be properly described as protective. Take for instance the case of the 2s. registration duty on corn which had been proposed. He should like to ask whether that was a protective duty; and if it was a protective duty, whom did it protect? [An HON. MEMBER on the LABOUR Benches: The landlords.] Hon. Members opposite might say that it would not stop there; that it would be gradually raised until it became protective. That was the old argument of the thin edge of the wedge, and would prevent any necessary reform being carried into effect. What he said was—

"Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof."

Then as to the question of a general tariff, the only general tariff he had ever heard of was a 10 per cent. duty on foreign manufactured articles; and he was not at all sure whether that was at present more than a tentative suggestion. But assuming that it was part of the scheme of tariff reform contemplated, could it be called a protective duty? In his opinion it could not be a protection against the surplus stocks of foreign-made goods which were constantly being dumped down in our markets and sold at less than cost price. On the other hand, it would be a very desirable and useful means of broadening the basis of taxation at a time when increased sources of revenue were urgently needed to meet the growing demands upon our national expenditure, and would cause the foreigner to have to do at all events something in the direction of contributing towards the upkeep of our country and the expenses of our Government. It was well known that at the present time our manufacturers had, at a moderate computation, to pay something like 10 per cent. on the cost of the articles they produced, in the shape of rates and taxes, from which the foreigners who used our markets were entirely exempt.

*MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member is not dealing with the Amendment but with the main Question.

*SIR FRANCIS LOWE said he would only say in conclusion that surely this imposition of a ten per cent. all-round tariff would be of great advantage to us.

*MR. SPEAKER: I have already called the hon. Member to order three times, and I must ask him to discontinue his speech.

*MR. HOUSTON (Liverpool, West Toxteth) said he should endeavour to show that at least a portion of the people of this country had not demonstrated their unqualified fidelity to the principles of free trade. In Liverpool this was a burning question. Unlike the humorous and learned Member for Nottingham, he was a business man, and would endeavour to deal with this question from a business point of view. As this was a question of vital importance to the working classes of the country he would address himself more particularly to the hon. Members who sat below the gangway. and who were euphemistically described as Labour Members. Reminiscences, biography, and autobiography had been indulged in in the course of debate, and perhaps it might not be out of place if he followed the example of previous speakers. He was intended for the Church, but not feeling any call in that direction, and with a view of carrying out his boyish ambition of becoming one of the great shipowners of England, he refused to go to Oxford, and served his apprenticeship as an engineer and shipbuilder. He was therefore in the same position as many hon. Gentlemen occupying positions below the gangway in claiming to be a working man. He was quite sure that during the four years of his apprenticeship he worked as hard as any man in the place. At the present moment he ran lines of steamers from the continent to the colonies and South America and from the United States to the same colonies and to South America, and he was enabled by the experience which that gave him to understand what free trade meant. He had not been dependent upon Blue-books for belated information upon what was taking place in connection with the trade of this country. He might perhaps be permitted to say that he was not a member of the Tariff Reform League, but he wanted our trade with our colonies and foreign countries to be maintained. Trades unionists were the strongest protectionists in this country, and believed in protecting their trades against foreign invasion and non-unionist labour. He endorsed the views of the trade unionist in protecting his trade. He had from the earliest days since he was an employer worked in harmony with trade unions. He had never had a strike of his workmen. If Labour Members desired to know his character as an employer he would refer them to his late opponent, Mr. James Sexton, who was a prominent member of the Trade Union Congress. Therefore, speaking in sympathy with the trade unionists, he should think that in the best interests of the workers of this country they would not think of "demonstrating their unqualified fidelity to the principles and practice of free trade," as the Motion proposed. He had business houses not only in London, and Liverpool, but in New York, Buenos Ayres, and Cape Town, and agencies in every important country in the world. He spent £10,000 a year upon cables, and he practically kept his finger on the pulse of the trade of the world. He was interested besides in the Australian and Indian trades, and ran lines of steamships between the continent and this country as well as to the colonies.

MR. SPEAKER: I do not see what that has to do with the Question.

*MR. HOUSTON said that he was trying to prove that so far as his constituents were concerned they had not demonstrated "their unqualified fidelity to the principles and the practice of free trade," for he had pointed out to them during the election the folly of free trade. Would he not be in order in doing so?

MR. SPEAKER: It depends upon the way in which the hon. Member does it.

* MR. HOUSTON said that so-called free trade must be injurious to this country; even the Duke of Devonshire the other day complained that orders for rails had left this country. In connection with the recent election, quite apart from free trade, many other questions were voted on, including that of Chinese labour. As far as the recent election was concerned, the electors of Liverpool had not "demonstrated their unqualified fidelity to the principles and practice of free trade." They did not do so in his division, or in any of the other divisions. In the Abercromby Division, the principal question voted upon was that of Chinese labour. In the Exchange Division the principal question was Home Rule.

MAJOR SEELY (Liverpool, Abercromby) said that the leading paragraph in his address referred to free trade, but he attacked the policy of Chinese labour also.

*MR. HOUSTON said he quite accepted the hon. and gallant Member's statement, but would the hon. Member contradict him when he said that Chinese labour was a prominent and burning question in his constituency?

MAJOR SEELY agreed.

*MR. HOUSTON said in that case there was no need to dispute about it. In the East Toxteth Division the hon. Gentleman was returned more because of his pronounced Protestant principles than because of his free trade principles or his views on any other political question. The hon. Gentleman on one occasion said he was prepared to die for his religion. Lord George Gordon, the instigator of the "no popery" riots, also said he was prepared to die for his religion, but history recorded that before his death he became a convert to the Jewish religion and submitted to the surgical operation of the initial rite. In this House the hon. Member had expressed himself in a mild and temperate manner, but upon the platform he had been known to indulge in vitriolic vituperation of a late esteemed Member of the House, and if he were to repeat his words in the House he did not think they would commend themselves to the Ministerialists, and certainly not to Members on the Opposition side. In conclusion he could only say that a goodly proportion of the people of this country had not "demonstrated their unqualified fidelty to the principles and practice of free trade," nor did he think that the electors of Basingstoke did so. He felt that now that the "terminological inexactitude" with regard to Chinese labour had been disposed of—[MINISTERIALIST cries of "No"]—oh, but it had, on the admission of the Under-Secretary for the Colonies—now that it had been disposed of he believed that at any future bye-election which took place the country would not demonstrate in favour of free trade, but would do as Basingstoke had done.

MR. SAMUEL ROBERTS (Sheffield, Ecclesall) said he represented a city which had suffered very much from hostile tariffs. They returned five Members to this House, and three of them were pledged to tariff reform. He quite admitted, however, that the question of Chinese labour played a part in the election, and he himself was represented as a Chinaman with a pigtail. The hon. Baronet had said that in October last he came down and found them very busy and he thought they were very prosperous. That was quite true, because they were filling orders for the Government for armour plates of ships, in regard to which foreigners could not compete with them. They had not, however, so large a number of men now employed as they sometimes had. The hon. Baronet the Member for Colne Valley had referred to the iron and steel trades, and he (Mr. Roberts) wished to put before the House the arguments which he had put before his constituents. The hon. Baronet forgot, when referring to the prosperity of the iron and steel trade, to tell the House that whereas twenty-five years ago England was the head of the iron and steel trade, she now stood third in the race, if they took the consumption.

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order. I must ask the hon. Gentleman to read the Amendment and to consider it. The Question is whether or not at the general election the people of this country pronounced their opinion on free trade, unqualified or in any other manner. That is the only issue before the House.

*MR. DAVID MACIVER (Liverpool, Kirkdale): Are we not entitled to consider the Motion as it would read if this Amendment were carried?

*MR. SPEAKER: No; the Question is whether this Amendment is to be made or not, then the Resolution can be discussed. Until this Amendment is disposed of the rest of the Resolution is not open to discussion.

MR. SAMUEL ROBERTS said he thought he was entitled to allude to the injury done to the Sheffield cutlery trade by the action of foreign tariffs. If he was not allowed to enter into these questions it was difficult to make a speech at all. [A MINISTERIALIST: It is your own Amendment.] The hon. Member for Northampton spoke entirely on the question of free trade, and if they were not allowed to answer the arguments he brought forward, it did seem unfair [Cries of "Order"]—well it seemed a little bit inconsistent that they should not be allowed to put forward arguments in favour of tariff reform. If Mr. Speaker said he was not entitled to enter into the reasons which had made some of the industries of Sheffield suffer very severely from hostile tariffs he must bow to that ruling. He would raise the Question on an Amendment which he understood would be moved subsequently.

*MR. SPEAKER: As the right hon. Gentleman has appealed to me I would say that the first part of the Resolution deals with the question of fact in the past and the second part as to policy in the future. The Question now before the House is, Did the people of this country or did they not at the last election pronounce finally a verdict upon the question of free trade? If the hon. Gentleman has any arguments that there were any other matters upon which the election was fought—that free trade was not a question to which they gave their unqualified fidelity—the House would be ready to listen to him. The Amendment raises a very narrow issue, and hon. Members must confine themselves to that. [AN HON. MEMBER: Withdraw the Amendment and stop running away.]

MR. SAMUEL ROBERTS said the Amendment was not his. But as to the late election he was quite satisfied with the verdict in his constituency. He won, although his majority was reduced. His colleague also won, and the hon. and gallant Member for Central Sheffield won with an increased majority. They won the election in Sheffield on the question of tariff reform, because the workers in Sheffield, who had suffered severely from hostile tariffs, were satisfied that some reform must be made if we were to keep the industries and maintain full employment in this country. The House was aware of the increasing amount of manufactured goods we imported last year. We imported no less than £120,000,000 sterling worth of manufactured goods.

*MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Gentleman is quite relevant in one sentence, but in the next he strays into paths of irrelevancy.

MR. SAMUEL ROBERTS said he would not persevere with his arguments on that occasion. He hoped there would be another opportunity to bring them forward, and he also hoped that as their arguments were put before the country, the working men would come to see that tariff reform was the great cure for all their evils.

MR. STUART (Sunderland) said he thought the best proof of the fact that the country expressed itself in favour of free trade was in the condition of Parties in the House. No one would deny that other questions influenced the electors, but the main question was undoubtedly free trade. Another matter that had had great effect on the electorate was their dissatisfaction with the attitude of the Leaders of the Party opposite, and their incapability of understanding what the

Leader of the Party opposite meant. The electors were also dissatisfied with the way the Government had conducted the business of the House. Nobody supposed that free trade was a panacea for all the troubles of this country, but the people who advocated protection put it forward as the means of providing old-age pensions, of meeting the question of the unemployed, and of doing many other things. The questions that had been raised by the Labour Party which affected the working classes were going to be dealt with in this Parliament. In his own constituency free trade was advocated, because the people not only believed in free trade itself but believed that there was no antagonism between that question and social reform, and that the problems of social reform could be easier solved in an environment of free trade than in an environment of protection. He should therefore give his vote for the retention of these words in the Resolution, with the most perfect confidence that in the constituencies that he had seen, at any rate, the views, thoughts, and votes centred round the question of free trade.

COLONEL KENYON-SLANEY (Shropshire, Newport) said that in the Motion they were now considering it was asserted that the people of the United Kingdom had demonstrated their unqualified fidelity in the principle of free trade. He objected to that, for it ought to be put that a majority of the people had demonstrated their unqualified fidelity. If that assertion in the Motion were true, it was equally true that the minority had demonstrated their unqualified opposition to free trade. He thought, therefore, that to make the matter clear they should insert the word "majority." There was a prevailing idea that the agricultural interest—which naturally, and by universal consent, was entitled to take a very keen personal interest in the issue between free trade and protection—as represented by the tenant farmer, had voted largely in favour of hon. Members on the Opposition side of the House, because they thought that the propositions put forward would benefit them by increasing the price of corn in this country. Anybody who thought that was entirely mistaken, for he did not think it was present at all in the minds of any large number of farmers, and certainly not in the case of the more intelligent and thinking members of that class. On the contrary, as far as he was entitled to speak for them—and he thought he knew as much about them as most hon. Members of this House—he knew that the reason they adopted the course they did was not because they expected any benefit from a rise in the price of corn, but because they recognised in the policy of the Opposition the probability of an increased general prosperity, and it was because of the better markets which they expected would result from that prosperity that they supported fiscal reform. It was on those grounds, in his opinion, that the great mass of the agricultural community gave their votes to the Opposition. That contention had been largely maintained. The farmers had been charged with voting for the Conservative Party because they saw a possible rise in the price of their wheat. The farmers were sufficienly wide awake to recognise that the policy suggested from the Opposition side would have the effect of lowering rather than raising the price of corn Therefore he hoped that hon. Members on the Ministerial side, and the country generally, would acquit the agricultural and farming interests of any such narrow-minded views, and recognise that they were looking to a wider issue on this question, and that it was in the general prosperity of the country that they expected to find their own legitimate advantage and chance of success.

*MR. BERTRAM (Hertfordshire, Hitchin) said he wished to say a few words of a more or less personal kind on the actual Question before the House. In common with a large number of hon. Members on the Ministerial side, he should have made no effort whatever to get a seat in the House of Commons but for the tariff reform question which was raised by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham in the year 1903. He felt sure that Liberal candidates would not have been so successful at the election but for the grave apprehension which was felt by practically all the poor people in the constituencies as to the danger and misfortune which awaited them if the tariff reformers succeeded at the polls. So far as the farmers were concerned, they almost universally supported the tariff reformers, not because they believed that a 2s. duty upon wheat would be a benefit to them, but because, although they expected no immediate advantage from the tax, they saw in it the beginning of a protective system, and that weighed very heavily with them. It had been said that the Ministerialists owed their seats to having pushed forward the question of Chinese labour. [OPPOSITION cries of "Slavery."] Yesterday was given up to a denunciation of Liberal candidates for putting forward this question, but surely it could not be contended that any tariff reformers voted for free traders because they were opposed to Chinese slavery, and that they gave up their great ideal in order to support people who were determined to remove the Chinese labourer from South Africa. Surely it could not be seriously contended that they on the Government side of the House did not represent the policy of free trade with which the original Motion dealt. He was afraid the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham would be indignant at his suggestion, but he believed that the right hon. Gentleman was the political father of a great number of those who were now sitting on the Ministerial side of the House, because, but for the raising of the fiscal question which he had two years ago deliberately placed before the country, and which he and his newspapers and supporters had assiduously preached ever since, they would probably have made no effort to enter Parliament. It was therefore of the utmost importance that they should register upon the journals of this House those words which the right hon. Gentleman had suggested should be omitted; and when the time came to vote, he thought they would be practically unanimous against the Amendment.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR (City of London): You have stated from the Chair, Sir, that the Amendment now before us is narrow in its scope. I need hardly say that I should be the last person in the House to minimise that declaration, and as far as I myself am concerned, and as far as I can speak for my hon. friends, there is no reason why there should be a prolonged discussion on this aspect of the Resolution; and when the Government have thought fit to treat us with that ordinary respect which Governments generally pay to their critics, and to make some reply to the Amendment which has been moved in so clear and able a speech—when they have thought fit to carry out that elementary duty of a Government, it may be an advantage that we should take a decision on the Amendment. May I point out to the hon. and learned Gentleman, who, I presume, as the only occupant of the Front Bench, is detailed to offer a reply on behalf of the Government — may I point out that these words which we desire to leave out are a perfectly gratuitous addition to a perfectly gratuitous Resolution? There is no conceivable reason why the Government should ever have brought forward the Resolution. They have brought forward a subject which took six days to discuss on the Address two years ago, six full days, morning and evening; and, not content with bringing forward a Resolution on the fiscal question which in their hands took six days to discuss two years ago, they have loaded that Resolution with an addition which does not strengthen it, which is, as we believe, untrue, and which, whether it be true or untrue, is undoubtedly debateable in the highest degree, and on which they have deliberately provoked every man in this House to show from his own electioneering experiences whether it is a fact or not that the verdict of the country was given on the fiscal question. But really the Gentlemen who have spoken from those benches, with the exception of the Gentleman who preceded me—whose speech was absolutely relevant, for he gave his own experiences—I do not see that Gentlemen on the other side have dealt with the topic before us at all. There has been a long, very interesting, and very discursive oration from the hon. Gentleman the Member for Northampton who told us a great deal about his biography and something about his constituency; but, so far as I remember, he told us nothing whatever which would enable us to make up our minds as to whether he is the elected champion of the constituency of Northampton because he is a free-trader, or whether there was some other natural and proper reason which would induce the constituency to vote for him. And what am I to say of another speech, that of the hon. Member for Sunderland? I listened to that speech with the greatest doubt as to which way the hon. Gentleman means to vote, because he told us that the motives which actuated his constituents were of a most mixed kind, and he did me the honour to explain that the most powerful motive which brought his friends into power was the general detestation of the British public of the speeches, the methods, and the policy which I individually and personally have pursued during the last ten years. That may be a good motive or a bad motive. It may show wisdom or folly on the part of those who held it. It may show a happy discrimination of political motives and an admirable and lucid judgment on political performances. But, whether it be good or bad, whether those descriptions are proper to apply to it or not, this at all events is certain, it is not the motive mentioned in the Resolution; and if the reason why hon. Gentlemen opposite are now enjoying, if that be the word, what are poetically but very falsely described as the sweets of office—if the reason is because of my deficiencies, my positive evil deeds, my shortcomings, then in the interests of truth cut out the words which we desire to cut out, and bring forward a separate Resolution explaining why it is that we are sitting on the left hand of the Speaker instead of the right, on which we shall be able to discuss my performances for ten years with great advantage to myself, the House, and, no doubt, the country as a whole. But is it not folly for a Government to put into a controversial Resolution a controversial parenthesis like the present, and is it not doubly foolish when their own men cannot get up and speak with regard to the reason why they were returned to this House without showing, as indeed everybody knows is the fact, that the motives that actuated the constituencies were of various kinds? Labour questions, personal questions, the demerits of the late Government, the transcendent but hitherto unexperienced merits of the present Government, and many other causes contributed to the great result. Very well, if that be true, at all events in this respect try and make your Resolution conform with facts. You have not been able, with regard to the fiscal aspect of it, either to answer the questions which I and other people have put on the subject as to its true meaning, or to make it clear, lucid, and explicit; but do not at all events, put in the absolutely gratuitous mis-statement to which we object. At all events perhaps the Government will feel that they have taken up quite enough public time by a wholly unnecessary controversy which they have dragged into the middle of their distribution of public business, and will diminish that controversy as far as they can by acceding to the Amendment, and allow us to get on to what I admit is far more interesting, inasmuch as it deals with the future as well as the past, the real discussion on the fiscal question. If so, I do not see why this portion of the debate should not finish with a speech from the hon. and learned Gentleman opposite and a division. I make this suggestion in the interests of progress and I hope it will be acceded to by the Government.

THE SOLICITOR-GENERAL (Sir W. ROBSON, South Shields): The suggestion which the right hon. Gentleman has just made is one that I am sure the House is very glad to hear. The progress of the debate on this Amendment has not been by any means servicable from any point of view, certainly not from the point of view of conserving and using carefully the time of the House. The Leader of the Opposition has not had the advantage of hearing the whole of the debate on this Amendment.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: More than anybody on that bench.

SIR W. ROBSON: If he had heard the whole of the debate, he would have been, I am afraid, almost pained to observe the difficulties which his followers felt in doing their best to follow out the strategical policy which the Amendment illustrates, and to take up as much time as could be taken up without transcending the rules of order so as to avoid any discussion on the main Resolution. His loyal followers, one after another, rising in obedience to some word of command [OPPOSITION Cries of "No" and "Withdraw"], proceeded to do their very best to deal with the Amendment, and they found themselves unable to utter, may I say, an orderly word on the subject on which they were supposed to speak. The Speaker, with the kindness which he always shows, gave every latitude; hon. Members were allowed to proceed in the hope that they would ultimately develop their point; but whenever they reached it, it was invariably discovered to be out of order. [Cries of "Oh" and "Are you in order?"] To proceed with the main Resolution is what we desire, and what we have been desiring for some time. There is very little indeed to answer in the speeches that have been delivered. I do not think I can pursue them without meeting with the same fate as the speakers themselves; I should inevitably be called to order at every point. There is perhaps one material point raised by the speakers opposite. It has been complained that the election was won upon some leaflets relating to Chinese labour. According to hon. Members opposite, the issue of free trade and protection was almost as irrelevant to the election as it is to this particular Amendment. The only thing apparently upon which the ignorant multitudes of the country were giving their votes was some leaflet or picture relating to Chinese labour in which Asiatics appeared in a suspicious attitude with their hands behind their backs, suggesting to the fervid imaginations of hon. Gentlemen opposite manacles and worse things besides. There is a very easy answer to the suggestion that those leaflets really affected the issue of the election. Do hon. Members opposite suggest that if the leaflets had not been issued, or if they had been issued in a different form, the election would have had a different result? [OPPOSITION cries of "Yes."] Let us see whether these leaflets did the mischief hon. Members suggest. The only fault I can find with them is that they fell far below any adequate portraiture of the true facts of the case. The picture ought to have been one of Chinamen, laid across the block and suffering the lash, Chinamen laid there by the hand of an English Governor.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I beg to ask you, Mr. Speaker, as you ruled that several Gentlemen were out of order who did not discuss the actual motives which produced the present majority on the other side of the House, whether the learned Solicitor-General is in order, whether he is not obstructing business by discussing the exact degree to which these outrages on Chinamen have or have not been perpetrated in South Africa.

*MR. SPEAKER: The description of a picture or a placard which was not used at the general election is certainly irrelevant.

SIR W. ROBSON: Let us examine exactly what the point of the Amendment is. We are not in this Amendment discussing free trade, or the merits of Chinese labour. We are discussing, according to the rule already laid down by you, Sir, whether or not free trade was the main and decisive subject at the election. It is suggested on the other side that free trade was not the decisive subject, but that it was Chinese labour, and that Chinese labour was made the decisive subject by means of misrepresentation which exaggerated the evils attaching to that form of industry. I have shown, and I submit with great respect that nothing can be more in order, that no such alleged misrepresentation could have had the effect supposed. Instead of it being an exaggeration it fell below the true state of things, and if a true picture had been presented it would not have altered the result, but would have been much more detrimental to the interests of hon. Members opposite. The right hon. Gentleman says that the words of which he complains are totally superfluous. I am not aware that any of the words referred to by the Amendment have met with strong rebuke, except the words, "unqualified fidelity," which were made the subject of a very witty observation by the hon. and learned Member for the Walton Division in a most brilliant, yet not, I think, luminous, speech. That criticism was material not so much to the general subject of the debate as to this very Amendment. The hon. and learned Member complained that he did not understand what the words "unqualified fidelity" meant. I advise him to put the same question in the same satirical tone in the domestic sphere. I imagine that in the home circle he would find that a philosophic attitude or Platonic deviations from unqualified fidelity were by no means welcome. We know perfectly well what the words mean, and I think the hon. and learned Member also was not unaware of their meaning. His speech, as I have said, was brilliant, but not luminous. It is not always the light that glitters, and, beyond the admirable jokes with which he diverted the House, what instance did he give us relating either to the main question or to the particular subject of this Amendment? As one listened to his speech, and, indeed, to many of the speeches from hon. Gentlemen opposite, one could not help thinking of a Shakespearian parallel. It was that of Falstaff's tavern bill. Hon. Members may remember that when Prince Henry finds Falstaff's reckoning, he reads out the items—Item No. 1, two gallons of sack, five shillings; item No. 2, bread, one halfpenny—and he goes on to observe—

> "Here is an intolerable deal of sack to a very small quantity of bread."

We have had, in these brilliant speeches, an intolerable deal of sack, and a very small quantity of fiscal bread. I entirely concur with the desire expressed by the Leader of the Opposition that we should pass from the Amendment, that we should now take a vote upon it, and proceed forthwith to deal with the main subject of the debate.

*MR. KEIR HARDIE (Merthyr Tydvil) said the terms of the Amendment made it imperative that those who fought the elections, not with free trade as the main issue, should make their position clear. When they were to be called upon to vote for or against the Amendment they did not desire their vote to be misinterpreted or misunderstood. In his own case and that of the bulk of his colleagues they accepted free trade as an existing fact, and their constituents in the main favoured it. They did not waste time discussing a point upon which they were agreed. Neither free trade nor protection was with them the main issue. They pointed out that in countries where protection obtained it had not brought any benefit which they could discover to the great bulk of the common people. They showed how in America and Germany—countries which were constantly being held up to us for imitation—despite the fiscal policy, the condition of the people was not a whit better than it was at home. They pointed out that in America, despite its system of high tariffs the condition of the worker was gradually worsening, and therefore they disposed of protection as being in any sense a remedy for the social evils which admittedly existed. But in like manner they pointed to the fact that sixty years of free trade in Great Britain had not solved the social and industrial problem. It must be admitted that whilst in America great cartels and trusts were accumulating under protection, in our own country under free trade great cartels were existing and great combines were being formed. He and his friends, therefore, reasoned that the distinct issue was what means should be taken to improve the condition of the people apart from what was to them the settled question of protection *versus* free trade. One point which most of them made was that whilst upholding free trade as applied to our trade and commerce, they discarded utterly, as every party in the country had discarded, the main body of the doctrine underlying the free trade movement. It was a quarter of a century since Mr. Gladstone was taunted in the House with having banished political economy to Saturn. From that day to this not only in Ireland, but in connection with the factory legislation and trade legislation of various kinds, they had abandoned the idea that the individual was free to do as he pleased with his own. That was an essential part of the doctrine underlying the free trade movement. He and his friends pointed out to their constituents that it was no longer safe to leave the individual free with the old free trade theory, that if each were left free to do as he pleased that each would find his proper place in society. They pointed out that the State had interfered to remove restrictions which the law had imposed on trade and commerce, but they claimed that there was now an equal duty on the State to impose restrictions upon those who by reason of ownership and the abuse of ownership of land and capital were imposing hardships on the great majority of the common people. They believed in free trade, but held that in itself it would not solve the problem of providing for the necessities of the aged poor. He was in this difficulty, that the Motion as drafted would commit them to vote for or against the assertion that free trade was the one issue before the country at the last election. He entered a *caveat* against time being given for this Motion when the Premier was first questioned on the subject. He repeated that to-night with increased emphasis. They had wasted a day and a half in discussing an issue which was a foregone conclusion. The time might have been profitably spent in redeeming some of those promises upon the strength of which the Government won so handsomely at the late election. But there was no mistaking the fact that free trade was one of the issues, and a prominent one, in the contests lately concluded. Whilst he and his friends would vote against the Amendment he wished it to be understood that by so doing they did not commit themselves to the statement that free trade was the issue on which they won their elections. It was an incident, but the great question which won the election was the condition of the people and the need for having a Party in the House which was tied neither to free trade nor to protection, but was free to use its power in any way necessary to bring about social reforms.

MR. HUNT (Shropshire, Ludlow) said the hon. Member for Northampton did not appear to be able to say whether we had free trade or not. It seemed to him that free trade was quite a wrong name. We had not even free imports, because we were obliged to tax certain commodities.

*MR. SPEAKER: The speech of the hon. Member is not relevant to the Amendment before the House.

MR. HUNT said he was sorry if he had said anything which was not in order. He thought at all events he might be allowed to speak on the question of how Gentlemen opposite won the late election. The Solicitor-General had said that the question of Chinese labour had not much to do with it. He understood that the pictures of how Chinamen were alleged to be treated in South Africa were taken for the purpose of being sent home to help the Radical cause at the election. The only real cases of cruelty that they proved were got in that way. In his own constituency a picture was displayed, showing a Chinaman chained round the neck. His opponent declared wherever he went that the Chinese in South Africa were slaves. He had not the slightest doubt that such representations had a great deal to do with the result of the elections throughout the country. It was probably the most misleading political cry that had ever been used, and he hoped it would not be repeated in future. They had even gone as far as this, that a speech was made in one of the border towns of Wales, that if the people voted for him their children would be burned. He had been trying to disabuse the people in his constituency of these extraordinary inexactitudes which had been told them all over the country by Liberal canvassers—both ladies and gentlemen. These canvassers went into the cottages and said, "Do you know what a quarter is?" The reply was a quarter is a quarter of a cwt. or 28 lbs.; and then the canvassers said that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham was going to put a tax of 2s. a quarter on wheat which came into this country. That was in the local papers, and he did not think there was much doubt about it. His opponent at one of his meetings told the audience that the proposed tax on wheat would increase their cost of living in one family by 4s. 6d. per week. But the proposal of the right hon. Member for West Birmingham was to impose a tax of 2s. a quarter, which was 496 lbs., and a quarter would make at least 120 loaves.

*MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Gentleman must come more closely to the subject matter of the Amendment.

MR. HUNT said he was going to show the difference between the facts and the pictures of the Radical candidates which he had in his possession.

*MR. SPEAKER: That is certainly not in order.

MR. HUNT said he regretted that he could not tell the House what it was possible for a 2s. duty per quarter to bring about. The Opposition candidate in his division was running the big loaf for all it was worth; and he wanted to show that even supposing—which was most unlikely that the consumer paid the whole of the tax——

*MR. SPEAKER: As I have already twice called the hon. Member to order for irrelevance, I must now direct him to resume his seat.

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 445; Noes, 118. (Division List No. 12).

AYES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
Acland, Francis Dyke
Agnew, George William
Ainsworth, John Stirling
Alden, Percy
Allen, A. Acland (Christchurch)
Allen, Charles P. (Gloucester)
Ambrose, Robert
Armitage, R.
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Asquith, Rt. Hn. Herbert Henry
Astbury, John Meir
Atherley-Jones, L.
Baker, Sir John (Portsmouth)
Baker, Joseph A. (Finsbury, E.
Balfour, Robert (Lanark)
Baring, Godfrey (Isle of Wight)
Barker, John
Barlow, John E. (Somerset)
Barlow, Percy (Bedford)
Barnard, E. B.
Barnes, G. N.
Barran, Rowland Hirst
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Beale, W. P.
Beauchamp, E.
Beaumont, Hubert (Eastbourne
Beaumont, W. C. B. (Hexham)
Beck, A. Cecil
Bellairs, Carlyon
Benn, John Williams (Devonp't
Benn, W. (T'w'r Hamlets, S. Geo.
Berridge, T. H. D.
Bertram, Julius
Bethell, J. H. (Essex, Romford)
Bethell, T. R. (Essex, Maldon)
Billson, Alfred
Birrell, Rt. Hon. Augustine
Black, Arthur W. (Bedfordshire
Boland, John
Bolton, T. D. (Derbyshire, N.E.
Bottomley, Horatio
Brace, William
Branch, James
Brigg, John
Broadhurst, Henry
Brocklehurst, W. D.
Brodie, H. C.
Brooke, Stopford
Brunner, J. F. L. (Lancs., Leigh)
Bryce, Rt. Hn. James (Aberdeen
Bryce, J. A. (Inverness Burghs)
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Buckmaster, Stanley O.
Burke, E. Haviland-
Burns, Rt. Hon. John
Burnyeat, J. D. W.
Burt, Rt. Hon. Thomas
Buxton, Rt. Hn. Sydney Charles
Byles, William Pollard
Cairns, Thomas
Caldwell, James
Cameron, Robert
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H.
Carr-Gomm, H. W.
Causton, Rt. Hn. Richard Knight
Cawley, Frederick
Chance, Frederick William
Channing, Francis Allston
Cheetham, John Frederick
Cherry, R. R.
Churchill, Winston Spencer
Clancy, John Joseph
Clarke, C. Goddard (Peckham)
Cleland, J. W.
Clough, W.
Coats, Sir T. Glen (Renfrew, W.)
Cobbold, Felix Thornley
Cogan, Denis J.
Collins, Stephen (Lambeth)
Collins, Sir W. J. (S. Pancras, W
Cooper, G. J.
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Corbett, C. H. (Sussex, E. Grins'd
Cornwall, Sir Edwin A.
Cory, Clifford John
Cotton, Sir H. J. S.
Cowan, W. H.
Cox, Harold
Craig, Herbert J. (Tynemouth)
Crean, Eugene
Cremer, William Randal
Crombie, John William
Crooks, William
Crosfield, A. H.
Crossley, William J.
Cullinan, J.
Dalmeny, Lord
Dalziel, James Henry
Davies, M. Vaughan- (Cardigan)
Davies, Timothy (Fulham)
Delany, William
Devlin, Charles Ramsay (Galway
Dewar, Arthur (Edinburgh, S.)
Dickinson, W. H. (S. Pancras, N.
Dickson-Poynder, Sir John P.
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Dillon, John
Dobson, Thomas W.
Dolan, Charles Joseph
Donelan, Captain A.
Duckworth, James
Duffy, William J.
Duncan, C. (Barrow-in-Furness
Dunn, A. Edward (Camborne)
Dunne, Major E. M. (Walsall)
Edwards, Clement (Denbigh)
Edwards, Enoch (Hanley)
Edwards, Frank (Radnor)
Elibank, Master of
Ellis, Rt. Hon. John Edward
Erskine, David C.
Esmonde, Sir Thomas
Essex, R. W.
Eve, Harry Trelawney
Everett, R. Lacey
Faber, G. H. (Boston)
Fenwick, Charles
Ferens, T. R.
Ferguson, R. C. Munro
Ffrench, Peter
Field, William
Fiennes, Hon. Eustace
Findlay, Alexander
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Flynn, James Christopher
Foster, Rt. Hon. Sir Walter
Fowler, Rt. Hon. Sir Henry
Fuller, J. M. F.
Fullerton, Hugh
Furness, Sir Christopher
Gardner, Col. A. (Herefordsh. S.
Gibb, James (Harrow)
Gilhooly, James
Gill, A. H.
Ginnell, L.
Gladstone, Rt. Hn. Herbert John
Glover, Thomas
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Gooch, George Peabody
Grant, Corrie
Greenwood, G. (Peterborough)
Greenwood, Hamar (York)
Grey, Rt. Hon. Sir Edward
Grove, Archibald
Gulland, John W.
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Haldane, Rt. Hon. Richard B.
Hall, Frederick
Halpin, J.
Hammond, John
Harcourt, Rt. Hon. Lewis
Hardie, J. Keir (Merthyr Tydvil)
Hardy, George A. (Suffolk)
Harmsworth, Cecil B. (Worc'r)
Harmsworth, R. L. (Caithn's-sh)
Harrington, Timothy
Hart-Davies, T.
Harvey, A. G. C. (Rochdale)
Harwood, George
Haslam, James (Derbyshire)
Haslam, Lewis (Monmouth)
Haworth, Arthur A.
Hazel, Dr. A. E.
Hazleton, Richard
Healy, Timothy Michael
Hedges, A. Paget.
Helme, Norval Watson
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Henry, Charles S.
Herbert, Colonel Ivor (Mon., S.)
Herbert, T. Arnold (Wycombe)
Higham, John Sharp
Hobart, Sir Robert
Hobhouse, Charles E. H.
Hodge, John
Hogan, Michael
Holden, E. Hopkinson
Holland, Sir William Henry
Hooper, A. G.
Hope, John Deans (Fife, West)
Hope, W Bateman (Somerset, N
Horridge, Thomas Gardiner
Howard, Hon. Geoffrey
Hudson, Walter
Hutton, Alfred Eddison
Hyde, Clarendon
Idris, T. H. W.
Illingworth, Percy H.
Jackson, R. S.
Jacoby, James Alfred

Johnson, John (Gateshead)
Johnson, W. (Nuneaton)
Jones,David Brynmor(Swans'a
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Jones,William (Carnarvonshire
Jowett, F. W.
Joyce, Michael
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kekewich, Sir George
Kelley, George D.
Kennedy, Vincent Paul
Kilbride, Denis
Kincaid-Smith, Captain
King, Alfred John (Knutsford)
Kitson, Sir James
Laidlaw, Robert
Lamb, Edmund G. (Leominster
Lamb, Ernest H. (Rochester)
Lambert, George
Lamont, Norman
Law, Hugh Alexander
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Lea,Hugh Cecil(St.Pancras, E.
Leese,Sir Joseph F.(Accrington
Lehmann, R. C.
Lever, A. Levy (Essex,Harwich
Lever, W. H. (Cheshire,Wirral
Levy, Maurice
Lewis, John Herbert
Lloyd-George, Rt. Hon. David
Lough, Thomas
Lundon, W.
Lupton, Arnold
Luttrell, Hugh Courtenay
Lyell, Charles Henry
Lynch, H. B.
Macdonald, J. R. (Leicester)
Macdonald,J.M.(Falkirk B'ghs
Mackarness, Frederic C.
Maclean, Donald
Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
Macpherson, J. T.
MacVeagh, Jeremiah (Down, S.
MacVeigh,Charles (Donegal,E.)
M'Arthur, William
M'Callum, John M.
M'Crae, George
M'Kean, John
M'Kenna, Reginald
M'Laren, H. D. (Stafford, W.)
M'Micking, Major G.
Maddison, Frederick
Mallet, Charles E.
Mansfield, Harry (Northants)
Mansfield, H. Rendall (Lincoln
Marks,G.Croydon (Launceston)
Marnham, F. J.
Mason, A. E. W. (Coventry)
Massie, J.
Masterman, C. F. G.
Meehan, Patrick A.
Menzies, Walter
Micklem, Nathaniel
Molteno, Percy Alfred
Mond, A.
Money, L. G. Chiozza
Montgomery, H. H.
Mooney, J. J.
Morgan, G. Hay (Cornwall)
Morley, Rt. Hon. John
Morrell, Philip
Morse, L. L.
Morton, Alpheus Cleophas
Murphy, John
Murray, James
Myer, Horatio
Napier, T. B.
Newnes, F. (Notts, Bassetlaw)
Newnes, Sir George (Swansea)
Nicholls, George
Nicholson,Charles N. (Doncas'r
Nolan, Joseph
Norman, Henry
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
Nussey, Thomas Willans
Nuttall, Harry
O'Brien,Kendal(Tipperary,Mid
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Brien, William (Cork)
O'Connor,James (Wicklow, W.)
O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
O'Doherty, Philip
O'Donnell, C. J. (Walworth)
O'Dowd, John
O'Grady, J.
O'Kelly, Conor (Mayo, N.)
O'Kelly,James (Roscommon,N
O'Malley, William
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
Palmer, Sir Charles Mark
Paul, Herbert
Paulton, James Mellor
Pearce, William (Limehouse)
Pearson, Sir Weetman D.
Perks, Robert William
Philipps,Col.Ivor (S'thampton)
Philipps,J.Wynford (Pembroke
Philipps, Owen C. (Pembroke)
Pickersgill, Edward Hare
Pirie, Duncan V.
Power, Patrick Joseph
Price, C. E. (Edinb'gh,Central)
Price,Robert John(Norfolk, E.)
Priestley, Arthur (Grantham)
Priestley,W.E.B.(Bradford, E.
Radford, G. H.
Rainy, A. Rolland
Raphael, Herbert H.
Rea, Russell (Gloucester)
Rea, Walter Russell (Scarboro'
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Redmond, William (Clare)
Rees, J. D.
Rendall, Athelstan
Renton, Major Leslie
Richards, T. F. (Wolverh'mp'n
Richardson, A.
Rickett, J. Compton
Ridsdale, E. A.
Roberts, Charles H. (Lincoln)
Roberts, G. H. (Norwich)
Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs)
Robertson,Rt.Hn. E. (Dundee)
Robertson, J. M. (Tyneside)
Robertson,Sir G.Scott (Bradf'd
Robinson, S.
Robson, Sir William Snowdon
Roche, Augustine (Cork)
Roche, John (Galway, East)
Roe, Sir Thomas
Rose, Charles Day
Rowlands, J.
Runciman, Walter
Rutherford, V. H. (Brentford)
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland
Samuel, S. M. (Whitechapel)
Scarisbrick, T. T. L.
Schwann, C. Duncan (Hyde)
Schwann,Chas. E.(Manchester
Scott,A.H.(Asthon under Lyne
Sears, J. E.
Seaverns, J. H.
Seddon, J.
Seely, Major J. B.
Shackleton, David James
Shaw, Charles Edw. (Stafford)
Shaw, Rt. Hn. T. (Hawick B.)
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Sheehy, David
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Silcock, Thomas Ball
Simon, John Allsebrook
Sinclair, Rt. Hon. John
Smeaton, Donald Mackenzie
Smyth, Thomas (Leitrim, S.)
Snowden, P.
Soares, Ernest J.
Spicer, Albert
Stanger, H. Y.
Stanley,Hn.A.Lyulph (Chesh.)
Steadman, W. C.
Stewart, Halley (Greenock)
Strachey, Sir Edward
Straus, B. S. (Mile End)
Strauss, E. A. (Abingdon)
Stuart, James (Sunderland)
Sullivan, Donal
Summerbell, T.
Sutherland, J. E.
Taylor, Austin (East Toxteth)
Taylor, John W. (Durham)
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
Tennant, E. P. (Salisbury)
Tennant, H. J. (Berwickshire)
Thomas, Sir A. (Glamorgan,E.)
Thomas,David Alfred(Merthyr
Thompson,J.W.H (Somerset,E
Thorne, William
Tillett, Louis John
Tomkinson, James
Torrance, A. M.
Toulmin, George
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Verney, F. W.
Villiers, Ernest Amherst
Vivian, Henry
Wadsworth, J.
Waldron, Laurence Ambrose
Walker, H. De R. (Leicester)
Wallace, Robert
Walsh, Stephen
Walters, John Tudor
Walton, Sir John L. (Leeds, S.)
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
Ward, John (Stoke upon Trent
Ward,W.Dudley (Southampt'n
Wardle, George J.
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Wason, Eugene (Clackmannan)
Wason,John Cathcart(Orkney)
Waterlow, D. S.

Watt, H. Anderson
Weir, James Galloway
Whitbread, Howard
White, George (Norfolk)
White, Luke (York, E.R.)
White, Patrick (Meath, North)
White, J. D. (Dumbartonshire)
Whitehead, Rowland
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Wiles, Thomas
Wilkie, Alexander
Williams, J. (Glamorgan)
Williams, Osmond (Merioneth)
Williams, W. L. (Carmarthen)
Williamson, A. (Elgin & Nairn)
Wills, Arthur Walters
Wilson, C. H. W. (Hull, W.)
Wilson, Henry J. (York, W.R.)
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid)
Wilson, J. H. (Middlesbrough)
Wilson, J.W.(Worcestersh. N.)
Wilson, P. W. (St. Pancras, S.)
Wilson, W. T. (Westhoughton)
Wood, T. M'Kinnon
Woodhouse,Sir J.T.(Hudders'd
Young, Samuel
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE AYES.—Mr. George Whiteley and Mr. J. A. Pease.

NOES.

Anson, Sir William Reynell
Anstruther-Gray, Major
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster,Rt.Hn.Hugh O
Ashley, W. W.
Aubrey-Fletcher,Rt.Hn. Sir H.
Balcarres, Lord
Baldwin, Alfred
Balfour,RtHnA.J.(City Lond.)
Balfour, Capt. C.B. (Hornsey)
Banner, John S. Harmood-
Baring, Hon. Guy (Winchester)
Beach, Hn.Michael HughHicks
Beckett, Hon. Gervase
Bowles, G. Stewart
Boyle, Sir Edward
Bridgeman, W. Clive
Bull, Sir William James
Burdett-Coutts, W.
Butcher, Samuel Henry
Campbell,J.H.M.(Dublin Univ.
Carlile, E. Hildred
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Castlereagh, Viscount
Cave, George
Cavendish,Rt.Hn.Victor C. W.
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Cecil, Lord J. P. J. (Stamford)
Cecil, Lord R. (Marylebone, E.)
Chamberlain,Rt. Hn. J. (Birm.
Chamberlain,RtHn J.A.(Worc.
Clarke,Sir Edward(CityLondon
Coates, E. Feetham (Lewisham
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Courthope, G. Loyd
Craig,Charles Curtis(Antrim, S.
Craig,Captain James(Down, E.
Craik, Sir Henry
Cross, Alexander
Dalrymple, Viscount
Dixon-Hartland,Sir FredDixon
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Du Cros, Harvey
Duncan, Robt. (Lanark, Govan
Faber, George Denison (York)
Fardell, Sir T. George
Fell, Arthur
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Fletcher, J. S.
Gardner, Ernest (Berks, East)
Gibbs, G. A. (Bristol, West)
Gordon, J. (Londonderry, S.)
Gordon,SirW.Evans-(T'r Ham.
Haddock, George R.
Hambro, Charles Eric
Hamilton, Marquess of
Hardy,Laurence (Kent, Ashf'd
Harrison-Broadley, Col. H. B.
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Heaton, John Henniker
Helmsley, Viscount
Hervey,F.W.F.(Bury S.Edm's
Hill, Sir Clement (Shrewsbury)
Hill, Henry Staveley (Staffs)
Hills, J W.
Houston, Robert Paterson
Hunt, Rowland
Kennaway,Rt. Hn. Sir John H.
Kenyon-Slaney, Rt. Hn. Col.W.
Kimber, Sir Henry
Lambton, Hon. Frederick Wm.
Lee Arthur H.(Hants Fareham
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Liddell, Henry
Lockwood,Rt.Hn. Lt.-Col.A.R.
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lowe, Sir Francis William
MacIver, David (Liverpool)
Magnus, Sir Philip
Marks, Harry Hananel (Kent)
Mason, James F. (Windsor)
Meysey-Thompson,Major E. C.
Mildmay, Francis Bingham
Morpeth, Viscount
Muntz, Sir Philip A.
Nield, Herbert
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Parker, Sir Gilbert(Gravesend)
Parkes, Ebenezer
Pease,Herbert Pike(Darlington
Percy, Earl
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Ratcliff, Major R. F.
Rawlinson, John Frederick P.
Remnant, James Farquharson
Roberts, S. (Sheffield,Ecclesall
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Rothschild, Hon. Lionel Walter
Rutherford, W. W. (Liverpool)
Sassoon, Sir Edward Albert
Sloan, Thomas Henry
Smith,Aber H.(Hertford,East)
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (Strand)
Starkey, John R.
Stone, Sir Benjamin
Talbot,Rt.Hn.J.G.(Oxf'd Univ
Thomson,W. Mitchell-(Lanark)
Thornton, Percy M.
Turnour, Viscount
Vincent, Col. Sir C. E. Howard
Walrond, Hon. Lionel
Williamson, G. H. (Worcester)
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Wilson, A. Stanley (York, E.R.
Wortley,Rt.Hon. C. B. Stuart-
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George
Younger, George

TELLERS FOR THE NOES.—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Mr. Forster.

Main Question again proposed.

MR. WYNDHAM (Dover) said he rose to move to leave out from "proposal" to the end of Motion, and to insert "involving artificial protection against legitimate competition, but, with that reservation, is prepared to consider any scheme framed to secure more equal terms of competition for British trade and closer commercial union with the Colonies, or for purposes of revenue." He said that the House must see that it would be well advised to omit the latter part of the Resolution of the hon. Member for Colne Valley. Those words would entail three consequences. In the first place, the House would be bound from the present time until the next election not to create a system of protection either by a duty on foreign corn or by setting up a general tariff. In the next place, the House would be free in the same period to create a system of protection by any other method—for example, by imposing a tax on colonial corn, or by setting up a discriminating tariff. A general tariff meant a tariff operating equally against all other countries, and after the passing of this Resolution the Government would be precluded at any future time from putting on a general tax on luxuries and manufactures, but they would not be precluded from imposing such a tax, provided that it discriminated unfavourably against three or four nations. In the third place, the House would be free to impose a tax on foreign corn or to set up a general tariff if it were held that neither measure amounted to a system of protection; this was where the ambiguity of the Resolution came in. The President of the Board of Trade last night admitted in terms that a small tax on corn would not necessarily create a system of protection. He had been credibly informed by persons conversant with these matters that no duty less than 15s. a quarter on corn would have any protective effect, would bring into cultivation any greater area of wheat in this country. Therefore the shilling tax, once imposed by this House, or even a tax of two shillings, could not approach to setting up a system of protection. Did the present Indian tariff create a system of protection? The question threw a great deal of light on what was considered proper by orthodox political economists. The finances of India were ultimately under the control of the House of Commons. India had a tariff of 5 per cent. on a very large number of articles; but the tax on cotton was lowered against the wishes of India to 3½ per cent., and in that case only, in the sacred name of free trade, an Excise duty of exactly corresponding value was imposed. Very much the same condition of affairs was reproduced in Egypt. There there was a general tariff of 8 per cent.; but in the case of cotton alone it had been thought due to the sacred cause of free trade to place an Excise duty of 8 per cent. on the manufacture of cotton in Egypt. That was not protection, and therefore the House would be free to imitate the system which obtained in India and Egypt. The Prime Minister had said last night that this Resolution was quite intelligible, and in one sense it was. If it was read as he had read it, with the care demanded by that which had been obviously given to its composition, then it yielded the sense he had given. This House was bound not to create a protective system by these two means, but it was free to create a protective system by any other method, and free to adopt these methods if they did not create protection. There was one other sense in which this Resolution might be understood—that after the House had passed the Resolution the Government reserved to themselves the right to maintain the existing differentiation in the case of tobacco and cocoa, or to add new taxes to the list which were included in the present fiscal system. But if gentlemen on the Opposition side of the House were ever to advocate for purposes of revenue or any other purposes the imposition of taxes which deviated from the custom to which the country had become inured, they would be charged with a breach of faith. The Resolution left a great deal to be inferred. The electorate who read it would continue to think that any tax of a novel character—than any departure from the established habits of Budget-making which had obtained since Mr. Cobden's tariff—was a lapse into protection, and having been regaled with the pictures of the "big loaf" and having been instructed in accordance with historic methods, they understood that protection meant a recrudescence of those distressing circumstances which were described by Macaulay, though not by Emerson, as "the hungry forties." It was bad enough that the Opposition should be charged on no just ground with contemplating any policy which could reproduce the condition of "the hungry forties." But it was worse to be accused of a breach of faith simply for having departed from the routine of Budget-making. On these grounds he submitted that the words which he proposed to leave out should be omitted. But he proposed to substitute other words which would embody the views of the Opposition on many aspects of a very important problem. He and his friends repudiated any intention of bolstering up home industries against legitimate foreign competition, and without great discourtesy hon. Gentlemen opposite were not entitled to challenge the sincerity of that repudiation. They believed that these objects were expedient, and apprehended that they might become vital. They preferred to say so, in order that their language might not be open to misconception. There was a case for reconsidering the customary Budgets of the last forty or fifty years. Some, he knew, affected to believe that the only kind of Budget which they had had for many years was the concrete embodiment of scientific truths universally and eternally comparable only to the *Principia* cf Newton, and also of moral obligations no less binding than those in the Decalogue. That was the view which had been studiously inculcated into the people of this country. The House, he knew, was always impatient of theory, but when a theory of this kind in political economy was embodied in our present fiscal system, any departure from it was a breach of universal law, the old guard was brought up, practical considerations were shattered, and they were entitled to invite the House to listen to a few words on theory, at the peril, of course, of emptying the House. No political economist in recent years had ever alleged that the objects to which they were accustomed were the embodiment of these high canons or principles, or even that these principles were eternally true and universally applicable. Most of them were prudent enough to talk about English political economy. If he took a popular writer, Walter Bagehot, who tried to explain to Englishmen that these were not great scientific truths and moral laws, he should avoid, he hoped, being too theoretical. That writer declared that at the base of this view there lay the transferability of capital, and the transferability of labour, but when people wrote in that sense they did not contemplate the transfer of capital from this country to other countries. They did not contemplate that capital had been transferred to an amount which would almost daunt their imagination, for no less than £1,200,000,000 of English capital had been invested abroad in recent years, and a financier had told him that the official Return was well within the mark, and that £2,000,000,000 was nearer the sum. So long as capital was transferred from Ireland to England, so long as labour was transferred from Ireland to the United States, they watched the operation of these supposed eternal laws with the equanimity which became philosophers. But it did not end there. Those who dealt with the transferability of capital and labour contemplated still less that other countries, while accepting our capital in these enormous sums, would accept the best and reject the worst of our labour, would take the strong and healthy men, and return upon us the old men and the impoverished. They contemplated still less that other countries would reject the most highly finished products of labour. So long as our large cities were manned with cheap labour, so long as it was only a question of cheap food to keep that labour cheap every one was delighted; but now the markets of the world, like a monster lobster pot, accepted and retained all the best we had to give and refused and returned the worst upon our hands. There was another process at work. The same author declared that these so-called truths were not universally applicable, that they were not applicable to any country in which slavery existed. If it were true that the presence of real slavery in any country prevented the operation of these laws on which their practice was founded, then it was to a great extent true that the immigration of aliens, the importation into the country of goods which were "dumped" below their cost value, or goods produced by "white slaves," interfered also with the proper application of those principles to the conditions of life in this country. There used to be an elegant dining-room trick whereby one glass was filled with wine, and another glass with water; by the aid of a card the one glass was superimposed upon the other, and it was difficult to trace exactly what was going on; but the end of the trick was that the wine in one glass had gone into the other. Thus it was very hard to prove, nay, impossible to prove, by figures exactly what was going on now in this country. But he believed that the rejection by other countries of the worst men from the labour point of view, the rejection of the best products of labour from the labour point of view, and the gradual reabsorption of the worst form of labour and the worst products of labour had been something very like this dining-room trick. Was the existing system adequate to meet all the exigencies of the conditions under which we lived? It did not attain many of the objects which they, at any rate, believed to be desirable objects. They had been told that they could not do a number of things at the same time, that the same tax would not provide revenue and elicit better terms in foreign countries and give stability to the productions of the home markets, and that it could not at the same time assist in arriving at a closer union with the Colonies. The existing system, which they were warned on no account to touch or tamper with, did not attempt many of the changes—such as closer commercial union—that had been advocated, and it did not attain any of them in a manner satisfactory to any class in this country. Take the growing difficulties experienced in selling our goods in foreign markets. The present system did nothing to help us to get better terms for our goods in these foreign markets, and when complaint was made of this foreign treatment the people were told that it did not matter, because the volume of trade was so immense. They might examine that volume of trade and show that the best kind of trade went year after year more readily into the neutral markets of the world—such as China and Argentina—and went less readily into the great protective markets of the world. Because it went less readily the profit upon it was cut down. The manhood of a country could not live on the volume of trade; they must live on the profit of trade. Besides profit they had to consider security. It was necessary both to the employer and the working men that they should know whether they were likely to get a profit which would exist over a period of years. It was not worth while for the employer to put capital into a business, or for an artisan to train up his child to a skilled trade, unless each knew that for ten or a dozen years there was likely to be a return for the capital of the one, and the industry and skill of the other. The country, however, was given another solatium. It was told that there was the most-favoured-nation clause. There was very little consolation in that argument, which had been so frequently repeated throughout the country by the Chancellor of the Exchequer. How did it work with Russia? There was no duty on wheat in Russia; but though we were free to export our wheat, every one knew that there was precious little wheat grown by us that we could export. On the other hand, the duty on coal in Russia was almost incredible. It was 2s. on 36lb., and the duty on imported coal in the neighbourhood of the Black Sea, adjacent to Russia's own fuel fields, was 8s. per 36lb. He had addressed a number of meetings of working men, including miners, during the last few months, and he had always found them extremely sceptical that a duty of 1s. a ton at this end of the voyage was a grievous burden, when the same coal had to pay a tax of from 2s. to 8s. per 36 lb. at the other end of the voyage.

*MR. CAIRNS (Newcastle-on-Tyne): But Russia pays the tax.

MR. WYNDHAM: That opinion is not universally held by the working men.

*MR. CAIRNS: But it is true all the same.

MR. WYNDHAM: Nor is it laid down by the great pundits of political economy. What benefit did we get from the most-favoured-nation clause in other foreign protected markets? Lord Lansdowne's statement had never been disproved, wherein he showed that, under the old conventional tariff with Germany, out of a total trade of £33,700,000 relief was obtained in respect of only £87,620, and no relief was obtained under the most-favoured-nation clause in respect of £33,612,000. It was true that Lord Avebury had asserted the value of the most-favoured-nation clause, but its value had not been proved; whilst other authorities equally, perhaps more competent, had given their opinion that it had little or no effect. Upon this question of the most-favoured-nation clause he would quote the opinion of Sir Edward Law. After sketching the manner in which the most-favoured-nation clause worked, he concluded with these words—

> "It simply results in an undertaking that cotton goods coming from England will not be taxed higher than if coming from some other country, it being perfectly well known that England is the only country from which they will be imported; it does not secure any favoured treatment of cotton goods. The real fact is that most-favoured-nation privileges constitute no guarantee against the common practice of showing less favour to British trade than to that of any other nation."

He was asked to produce evidence and he supposed he would have to turn to the new conventional tariff agreed to by Germany. In respect to cotton yarns our trade with Germany was valued at

£2,500,000 a year, £800,000 of which represented yarns above the figure in the new tariff at which there was an increased duty. The whole tendency of the new tariff was to militate mainly, and it would seem almost exclusively, against British industry. In regard to woollen manufactures, Germany bought goods valued on the average at £5,000,000 a year. The duties on articles of our manufacture had been almost uniformly increased. The duties were heaviest in respect of those classes in which there was the largest trade, while in respect of those in which the trade was relatively quite small there was a decrease of duty. What else could we expect ? We positively invited this sort of treatment. The French had a saying that the absent are always wrong ; and that was never more true than when we absented ourselves from conferences where other people were trying to deal with each other. We almost invited foreign nations to tax us. It was said that onlookers saw more of the game than the players. The onlookers had exulted in what they believed to be the result of the last general election. The election began on the 13th of January, and by the 16th it was seen pretty well how it was likely to go. The American papers were full of comments on what they expected would be the verdict. The *Sun* exulted that no English tariff was possible, and that the United States and Germany and the other "business enemies of England" had nothing to fear. He should not himself call Germany and the United States the "business enemies of England," because they took advantage of all the opportunity which we gave them, but that was how they happened to describe themselves. Even at home dispassionate observers were not very well satisfied with the present condition of affairs. He was very much struck by one account of those conditions—

> "Industry is burdened, enterprise is restricted, workmen are thrown out of employment, and the poorer classes are straightened still further in their circumstances."

He believed that was a true description. That was a description which came from the Prime Minister's electoral address. Of course he attributed it to the fault of the wicked Tory Government. What filled the butcher's shop with big blueflies ? The Tories. If that was an accurate description, then surely there was a case for not binding the House of Commons for a period of six years. Why had we been beaten in respect of the motor-car industry by the foreigner ? Why had motor-cars of the value of over three millions been coming into this country ? And why was a great factory in his part of the country making only the wooden tops of the cars, while all the bottom machinery parts came in from abroad ? One reason was no doubt owing to the fact that we did not repeal certain laws in this country so soon as was the case in France, and France therefore got the start in that industry ; but he thought that, according to the most orthodox political economy, we should have been perfectly entitled to shelter our national industry during that period, and we should have had a great deal of revenue and acquired skill into the bargain. That was another reason for not binding ourselves solemnly never to discover any change in the principles of Budget-making which prevailed in this country. Turning to our investments abroad, we might regret that less and less money coming from many sources was being invested in this country. He was not one of those fortunate persons who had money of their own to invest, but he was frequently ask to act as trustee for other people. In his capacity as trustee he had to follow the advice given him by English bankers and brokers, and it was a remarkable fact that in recent years, the uniform advice he had received was to invest every penny he could abroad, and above all to invest very little, if any, in English home industries. ["Oh," and a Voice : They are not trust securities.] That was his experience, but it might have been singular. It was very strange that that advice had been tendered to one person three or four times if the same advice had not been tendered to other people in a similar position. In the neutral markets, our trade prevailed as the President of the Board of Trade pointed out last night. But what security had we that any market not now protected would not follow the example of other markets which were protected ? The treaty with Rumania, as he happened to know, was not obtained by talking about the virtue of political economy. He had heard on the authority of Sir Charles Kennedy, who had much to do with bringing that treaty about, that we obtained it because in Rumania a belief prevailed that the result of the general election would be different from that which had actually happened. In the Colonial markets we also prospered exceedingly—in fact prospered more than in any other market. But there, again, the question of security arose. Was it wise in respect to any of these markets, foreign, neutral, or Colonial, to trust for our trade to the chance arrangements of other people instead of entering into treaties of our own? Even supposing that by entering into treaties with our Colonies we suffered some slight disability, would it not be better to increase by no great amount the cost of production at home, if for that charge we had the security that tariffs should not be set up against us in markets where they did not now prevail? He knew when they argued in that sense they were told that, after all, the population of the United States was greater than that of Canada. The right hon. the Secretary for India stated during the recent election campaign that there were 80,000,000 of people in the United States and only 6,000,000 in Canada. But our trade with the United States was only 7s.6d. per head of the population, while our trade with Canada was £2 per head of the population. Did any one suppose that the population of Canada was going to remain at the present 6,000,000? Just as the expansion of the United States was the great feature of the nineteenth century, so the similar expansion of Canada might not improbably be the great feature of the twentieth century. Was it, therefore, wise for the House to declare formally that never, under any circumstances, would it even consider—and that was all he urged—any change of plan which might enable this country to secure the advantages which it now enjoyed in Canadian markets? But the matter had a higher aspect. The Unionist Party believed that modifications in our fiscal system might legitimately be made for the purpose of drawing the component parts of the Empire more closely together. It was so regarded in respect to India. It was thought perfectly right to interfere with the fiscal system of India and to put an excise duty on Indian manufactured cotton goods in order that the Lancashire cotton spinners might prosper; but it was thought to be wrong when an alteration was proposed in the existing fiscal system in order to produce similar results in Canada and the other Colonies. It was said that our present fiscal system was the best from the point of view of revenue. But was it? The Chancellor of the Exchequer had declared that the 1s. income-tax in a time of peace was too burdensome, that it cut into the reserve of credit to which we must look in time of peace. Well, the existing taxes on food pressed as heavily upon labour as the 1s. income-tax pressed upon capital. Both taxes pressed upon the middle classes, and he believed that if the sources of unemployment were analysed it would be found that much of it was due to the fact that the middle classes were not in a state of affluence. Therefore, it could not be said that the present fiscal system was an ideal one. How was it to be improved? By retrenchment? He wondered what hopes could reasonably be cherished by hon. Members of any great retrenchment on the Army and Navy. They had seen the Estimates; they had heard the pronouncements of the Ministers in charge of these Departments who took a more sanguine view than he was able to entertain. The Chancellor of the Exchequer said that before diminishing taxation the existing debt should be paid off. But surely that was not relevant to his argument. His point was that the existing system was onerous and ill-adjusted, and one could not reasonably hope to modify it by cutting down the Army and Navy. Besides, the Government had made promises in regard to many admirable objects, every one of which would entail a larger call upon the Exchequer than could possibly be saved on the Army and Navy. Was it therefore unreasonable to ask that the House should keep its liberty to impose new taxes, if necessary, for Imperial defence and domestic reform? If that were a reasonable plea might it not prove to be the case that perhaps by approximating our fiscal system to that of India we might get all the other parts of the Empire to share the burden we bore? Such a proposition violated no tradition of free trade, and was the one put forward by a distinguished South African statesman, Mr. Hoftmeyer. Was this House to say that it would not even consider such a proposition if it were to come from Mr. Hoffmeyer in the future as it came in the past? It was said that the present fiscal system was fair because under it the proportion between direct and indirect taxation was more equal than it used to be in former times. In Great Britain it was fifty-one to forty-seven, but in Ireland it was twenty-seven to seventy-two. He mentioned that not as a plea for Ireland, but because the case of Ireland was typical of all agricultural districts, and to show that the boasted equality between direct and indirect taxation did not benefit the agriculturist. On that account also much could be said for the principle of considering what changes might be made in our fiscal system from the point of view of obtaining revenue without imposing onerous burdens upon any class of the taxpayers. Out of this fiscal controversy he saw two ideals distinctly emerging. One of these ideals found expression in the speeches of the labour representatives. He and his friends could applaud the object of these representatives, though they might have to criticise the methods by which they hoped to reach it. That ideal was that taxation should be imposed in ever-increasing amount upon the accumulated wealth of the country, in order that the standard of life of the less fortunate of our people should, by the indirect operation of that taxation, be raised to a higher plane. The other ideal was the Unionist ideal. That was to enlist, if they could, all classes from all parts of the Empire in a common attempt to secure a fair return for the labour of the workers at home, and at the same time to draw the component parts of the Empire more closely together, a necessary step against the growing menace of other Powers. Their ideal might be called Conservative and Imperial, which now he understood were terms of abuse. It was based on the experience of the known past and not on an imaginary future; it was Imperial because they looked on the Empire as the beginning of what might be a great organic State. Whichever of those two ideals prevailed, he believed that political controversy in the near future would turn on the clash between those two ideals and upon nothing else, and that would be the line ultimately dividing two great Parties in that House. When that happened, as he believed it would, he ventured to think there would be less and less room for the useful activity of such a Government as that which now sat opposite. The Government seemed to him to claim the right to postpone the realisation of either ideal, because forsooth moderate men and recent converts must not be alarmed. That was Whiggery with a vengeance; it used to be the sacred principle of 1688, it was now to be the sacred principle and practice of free trade. Lest the custodians of that ark of the covenant should be disturbed in the possession of office, labour must be helped, and great care must be taken not to pursue too vigorous a foreign policy! He saw all the signs that marked the inception of a new Whig domination, a domination over open antagonists and their deluded allies, and a new Churchill might lead new hosts of Radicals into a new land of promise flowing with the unctuous adulation of Socialistic experiment. But for anything more substantial the Radicals were invited to wait. Meanwhile timid Tories were assured that any man of vigour and originality who had gravitated into close and loyal alliance with their own leaders was really, like Mr. Disraeli, a desperate fellow, bent on tampering with all that made England what she was. Those, they were to understand, were the sacred principles of free trade, which would not bear investigation, and which could not be intelligibly expressed. Meanwhile, as the guardian of eternal principle, by parity of reasoning, the new Whig claimed permanent office for the purpose of doing nothing in particular. But events moved rapidly in the twentieth century. In the late election a huge vote was given against the fiscal system, and many who voted for it were doubtful of its merits. It was doomed. The English fiscal system was doomed, and when it failed, as fail it must, if for example the nation desists from drinking more alcohol than was good for it; as fail it must if the Government attempted to fulfil the promises it made and satisfy the hopes it had raised—when it failed they meant to be free to construct from its ruins a system deliberately designed to secure fairer terms for the worker at home and foster an organic evolution of the Empire. He submitted that this House would be well advised to preserve its liberty of administration, and to that end he moved the Amendment which stood in his name.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN, Stirling Burghs): I beg to move that the Question be now put.

Motion made, and Question put, "That the Question be now put."

The House divided: Ayes, 471; Noes, 123. (Division List No. 13.)

AYES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
Abraham, William (Rhondda)
Acland, Francis Dyke
Adkins, W. Ryland
Agar-Robartes, Hon. T. C.
Agnew, George William
Ainsworth, John Stirling
Alden, Percy
Allen, A.Acland (Christchurch)
Allen, Charles P. (Gloucester)
Ambrose, Robert
Armitage, R.
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Asquith,Rt.Hon.HerbertHenry
Astbury, John Meir
Atherley-Jones, L.
Baker, Sir John (Portsmouth)
Baker,Joseph A.(Finsbury, E.)
Balfour, Robert (Lanark)
Baring, Godfrey (Isle of Wight)
Barker, John
Barlow, John E. (Somerset)
Barlow, Percy (Bedford)
Barnard, E. B.
Barnes, G. N.
Barran, Rowland Hirst
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Beale, W. P.
Beauchamp, E.
Beaumont, W. C. B. (Hexham)
Beck, A. Cecil
Bell, Richard
Bellairs, Carlyon
Belloc, Hiliare Joseph Peter R.
Benn,John Williams (Devonp't
Benn,W.(T'w'r Hamlets,S.Geo.
Bennett, E. N.
Berridge, T. H. D.
Bertram, Julius
Bethell, J. H. (Essex,Romford)
Bethell, T. R. (Essex, Maldon)
Billson, Alfred
Birrell, Rt. Hon. Augustine
Black,Arthur W.(Bedfordshire
Boland, John
Bolton, T.D. (Derbyshire,N.E.)
Bottomley, Horatio
Brace, William
Branch, James
Brigg, John
Broadhurst, Henry
Brocklehurst, W. D.
Brodie, H. C.
Brooke, Stopford
Brunner, J.F.L.(Lancs.,Leigh)
Brunner, Sir John T. (Cheshire)
Bryce, Rt.Hn. James(Aberdeen
Bryce, J. A. (Inverness Burghs)
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Buckmaster, Stanley O.
Burke, E. Haviland-
Burns, Rt. Hon. John
Burnyeat, J. D. W.
Burt, Rt. Hon. Thomas
Buxton, Rt.Hn.SydneyCharles
Byles, William Pollard
Cairns, Thomas
Caldwell, James
Cameron, Robert
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H.
Carr-Gomm, H. W.
Causton,Rt.Hn.RichardKnight
Cawley, Frederick
Chance, Frederick William
Channing, Francis Allston
Cheetham, John Frederick
Cherry, R. R.
Churchill, Winston Spencer
Clancy, John Joseph
Clarke, C. Goddard (Peckham)
Cleland, J. W.
Clough, W.
Coats,Sir T.Glen (Renfrew,W.)
Cobbold, Felix Thornley
Cogan, Denis J.
Collins, Stephen (Lambeth)
Collins,Sir Wm.J.(S.Pancras,W
Cooper, G. J.
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Corbett,CH (Sussex,E.Grinst'd
Cornwall, Sir Edwin A.
Cory, Clifford John
Cotton, Sir H. J. S.
Cowan, W. H.
Cox, Harold
Craig,Herbert J.(Tynemouth)
Crean, Eugene
Cremer, William Randal
Crombie, John William
Crooks, William
Crosfield, A. H.
Cross, Alexander
Crossley, William J.
Cullinan, J.
Dalmeny, Lord
Dalziel, James Henry
Davies, M. Vaughan-(Cardigan
Davies, Timothy (Fulham)
Davies, W. Howell (Bristol, S.)
Devlin,Charles RamsayGalway
Dewar, Arthur (Edinburgh, S.)
Dickinson, W.H.(St. Pancras,N
Dickson-Poynder, Sir John P.
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Dillon, John
Dobson, Thomas W.
Dolan, Charles Joseph
Donelan, Captain A.
Duckworth, James
Duffy, William J.
Duncan, C.(Barrow-in Furness
Duncan, J. H. (York, Otley
Dunn, A. Edward (Camborne)
Dunne, Major E. M. (Walsall)
Edwards, Enoch (Hanley)
Edwards, Frank (Radnor)
Elibank, Master of
Ellis, Rt. Hon. John Edward
Erskine, David C.
Esmonde, Sir Thomas
Essex, R. W.
Evans, Samuel T.
Eve, Harry Trelawney
Everett, R. Lacey
Fenwick, Charles
Ferens, T. R.
Ferguson, R. C. Munro
Ffrench, Peter
Field, William
Fiennes, Hon. Eustace
Findlay, Alexander
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Flynn, James Christopher
Foster, Rt. Hon. Sir Walter
Fowler, Rt. Hon. Sir Henry
Fuller, J. M. F.
Fullerton, Hugh
Furness, Sir Christopher
Gardner,Col.A. (Herefordsh.S.)
Gibb, James (Harrow)
Gilhooly, James
Gill, A. H.
Ginnell,L.
Gladstone,Rt.Hn.Herbert John
Glendinning, R. G.
Glover, Thomas
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Gooch, George Peabody
Grant, Corrie
Greenwood, G. (Peterborough)
Greenwood, Hamar (York)
Grey, Rt. Hon. Sir Edward
Grove, Archibald
Guest, Hon. Ivor Churchill
Gulland, John W.
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Haldane, Rt. Hon. Richard B.
Hall, Frederick
Halpin, J.
Hammond, John
Harcourt, Rt. Hon. Lewis
Hardie,J.Keir(Merthyr Tydvil
Hardy, George A. (Suffolk)
Harmsworth, Cecil B. (Worc'r)
Harmsworth,R.L.(Caithn'ss-sh.
Harrington, Timothy
Hart-Davies, T.
Harvey, A. G. C. (Rochdale)
Harwood, George
Haslam, James (Derbyshire)
Haslam, Lewis (Monmouth)
Haworth, Arthur A.
Hazel, Dr. A. E.
Hazleton, Richard
Healy, Timothy Michael
Hedges, A. Paget
Helme, Norval Watson
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Henderson,J. M.(Aberdeen, W.

Henry, Charles S.
Herbert, Colonel Ivor (Mon.,S.)
Herbert, T. Arnold (Wycombe)
Higham, John Sharp
Hobart, Sir Robert
Hobhouse, Charles E. H.
Hodge, John
Hogan, Michael
Holden, E. Hopkinson
Holland, Sir William Henry
Hooper, A. G.
Hope, John Deans (Fife, West)
Hope, W. Bateman (Somerset, N
Horniman, Emslie John
Horridge, Thomas Gardiner
Howard, Hon. Geoffrey
Hudson, Walter
Hutton, Alfred Eddison
Hyde, Clarendon
Idris, T. H. W.
Illingworth, Percy H.
Isaacs, Rufus Daniel
Jackson, R. S.
Jacoby, James Alfred
Jardine, Sir J.
Jenkins, J.
Johnson, John (Gateshead)
Johnson, W. (Nuneaton)
Jones, David Brynmor, (Sw'nsea
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Jones, William (Carnarvonshire
Jowett, F. W.
Joyce, Michael
Kearley, Hudson, E.
Kekewich, Sir George
Kelley, George D.
Kennedy, Vincent Paul
Kilbride, Denis
Kincaid-Smith, Captain
King, Alfred John (Knutsford)
Kitson, Sir James
Laidlaw, Robert
Lamb, Edmund G. (Leominster
Lamb, Ernest H. (Rochester)
Lambert, George
Lamont, Norman
Law, Hugh Alexander
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Lea, Hugh Cecil (St. Pancras, E.
Leese, Sir Joseph F. (Accrington
Lehmann, R. C.
Lever, A. Levy (Essex, Harwich
Lever, W. H. (Cheshire, Wirral)
Levy, Maurice
Lewis, John Herbert
Lloyd-George, Rt. Hon. David
Lough, Thomas
Lundon, W.
Lupton, Arnold
Luttrell, Hugh Courteney
Lyell, Charles Henry
Lynch, H. B.
Macdonald, J. R. (Leicester)
Macdonald, J. M. (Falkirk B'ghs
Mackarness, Frederic C.
Maclean, Donald
Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
Macpherson, J. T.
MacVeagh, Jeremiah (Down, S.
MacVeigh, Charles (Donegal, E.)

M'Arthur, William
M'Callum, John M.
M'Crae, George
M'Kean, John
M'Kenna, Reginald
M'Laren, Sir C. B. (Leicester
M'Laren, H. D. (Stafford, W.)
M'Micking, Major G.
Maddison, Frederick
Mallet, Charles E.
Manfield, Harry (Northants)
Mansfield, H. Rendall (Lincoln)
Markham, Arthur Basil
Marks, G. Croydon (Launcetons
Marnham, F. J.
Mason, A. E. W. (Coventry)
Massie, J.
Masterman, C. F. G.
Meehan, Patrick A.
Menzies, Walter
Micklem, Nathaniel
Molteno, Percy Alfred
Mond, A.
Money, L. G. Chiozza
Montgomery, H. H.
Mooney, J. J.
Morgan, G. Hay (Cornwall)
Morley, Rt. Hon. John
Morrell, Philip
Morse, L. L.
Morton, Alpheus Cleophas
Murphy, John
Murray, James
Myer, Horatio
Napier, T. B.
Newnes, F. (Notts, Bassetlaw)
Newnes, Sir George (Swansea)
Nicholls, George
Nicholson, Charles N. (Doncastr
Nolan, Joseph
Norman, Henry
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
Nussey, Thomas Willans
Nuttall, Harry
O'Brien, Kendal (Tipperary Mid
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Brien, William (Cork)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W.
O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
O'Doherty, Philip
O'Donnell, C. J. (Walworth)
O'Dowd, John
O'Grady, J.
O'Kelly, Conor (Mayo, N.)
O'Kelly, James (Roscommon, N
O'Malley, William
O'Mara, James
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
Palmer, Sir Charles Mark
Paul, Herbert
Paulton, James Mellor
Pearce, Robert (Staffs. Leek)
Pearce, William (Limehouse)
Pearson, Sir Weetman D.
Perks, Robert William
Philipps, Col. Ivor (S'thampton)
Philipps, J. Wynford Pembroke
Philipps, Owen C. (Pembroke)
Pickersgill, Edward Hare
Pirie, Duncan V.
Pollard, Dr.

Power, Patrick Joseph
Price, C. E. (Edinb'gh, Central)
Price, Robert John (Norfolk, E.
Priestley, Arthur (Grantham)
Priestley, W. E. B. (Bradford, E.)
Radford, G. H.
Rainy, A. Rolland
Raphael, Herbert H.
Rea, Russell, (Gloucester)
Rea, Walter Russell (Scarboro'
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Redmond, William (Clare)
Rees, J. D.
Rendall, Athelstan
Renton, Major Leslie
Richards, Thomas (W. Monm'th
Richards, T. F. (Wolverh'mptn
Richardson, A.
Rickett, J. Compton
Ridsdale, E. A.
Roberts, Charles H. (Lincoln)
Roberts, G. H. (Norwich)
Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Robertson, Rt. Hn. E. (Dundee)
Robertson, J. M. (Tyneside)
Robertson, Sir G. Scott (Bradf'rd
Robinson, S.
Robson, Sir William Snowdon
Roche, Augustine (Cork)
Roche, John (Galway, East)
Roe, Sir Thomas
Rose, Charles Day
Rowlands, J.
Runciman, Walter
Rutherford, V. H. (Brentford)
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Samuel, S. M. (Whitechapel)
Scarisbrick, T. T. L.
Schwann, C. Duncan (Hyde)
Schwann, Chas. E. (Manchester)
Scott, A. H. (Ashton under Lyne
Sears, J. E.
Seaverns, J. H.
Seddon, J.
Seely, Major J. B.
Shackleton, David James
Shaw, Charles Edw. (Stafford)
Shaw, Rt. Hon. T. (Hawick B.)
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Sheehy, David
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Silcock, Thomas Ball
Simon, John Allsebrook
Sinclair, Rt. Hon. John
Smeaton, Donald Mackenzie
Smyth, Thomas (Leitrim, S.)
Snowden, P.
Soares, Ernest J.
Spicer, Albert
Stanger, H. Y.
Stanley, Hn. A. Lyulph (Chesn.)
Steadman, W. C.
Stevenson, Francis S.
Stewart, Halley (Greenock)
Stewart-Smith, D. (Kendal)
Strachey, Sir Edward
Straus, B. S. (Mile End)
Strauss, E. A. (Abingdon)
Stuart, James (Sunderland)
Sullivan, Donal

Summerbell, T.
Sutherland, J. E.
Taylor, Austin (East Toxteth)
Taylor, John W. (Durham)
Taylor, Theodore C.(Radcliffe)
Tennant, E. P. (Salisbury)
Tennant, H. J. (Berwickshire)
Thomas, Abel (Carmarthen,E.)
Thomas,Sir A.(Glamorgan,E.)
Thomas,David Alfred(Merthyr
Thompson,J.W.H.(Somerset,E
Thorne, William
Tillett, Louis John
Tomkinson, James
Torrance, A. M.
Toulmin, George
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Verney, F. W.
Villiers, Ernest Amherst
Vivian, Henry
Wadsworth, J.
Waldron, Laurence Ambrose
Walker, H. De R. (Leicester)
Wallace, Robert
Walsh, Stephen
Walters, John Tudor
Walton, Sir John L. (Leeds, S.)
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
Ward, John (Stoke upon Trent
Ward,W.Dudley (Southampt'n
Wardle, George J.
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Wason, Eugene (Clackmannan)
Wason, John Cathcart (Orkney
Waterlow, D. S.
Watt, H. Anderson
Wedgwood, Josiah C.
Weir, James Galloway
Whitbread, Howard
White, George (Norfolk)
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
White, Patrick (Meath, North)
White, J. D. (Dumbartonshire)
Whitehead, Rowland
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Wiles, Thomas
Wilkie, Alexander
Williams, J. (Glamorgan)
Williams, Osmond (Merioneth)
Williams, W. L. (Carmarthen)
Williamson,A.(Elgin andNairn
Wills, Arthur Walters
Wilson, C. H. W. (Hull, W.)
Wilson, Henry J. (York, W. R.
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid)
Wilson, J. H. (Middlesbrough)
Wilson, J.W.(Worcestersh.N.)
Wilson, P. W. (St. Pancras, S.)
Wilson, W. T. (Westhoughton)
Winfrey, R.
Wodehouse,Lord(Norfolk Mid)
Wood, T. M'Kinnon
Woodhouse,SirJT. (Huddersf'd
Young, Samuel
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE AYES.—Mr. George Whiteley and Mr. J. A. Pease.

NOES.

Anson, Sir William Reynell
Anstruther-Gray, Major
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster,Rt.Hn.Hugh O
Ashley, W. W.
Aubrey-Fletcher,Rt.Hon.Sir H
Balcarres, Lord
Baldwin, Alfred
Balfour,RtHn A.J.(City Lond.)
Balfour, Capt. C. B. (Hornsey
Banner, John S. Harmood-
Baring, Hon. Guy (Winchester)
Barrie, H. T. (Londonderry,N.)
Beach, Hn. Michael HughHicks
Beckett, Hon. Gervase
Bowles, G. Stewart
Boyle, Sir Edward
Bridgeman, W. Clive
Bull, Sir William James
Burdett-Coutts, W.
Butcher, Samuel Henry
Campbell, J.H.M.(DublinUniv.
Carlile, E. Hildred
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Castlereagh, Viscount
Cave, George
Cavendish, Rt. Hon. VictorCW
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Cecil, Lord J. P. J. (Stamford)
Cecil, Lord R. (Marylebone, E.)
Chamberlain,Rt.Hon.J.(Birm.
Chamberlain,Rt Hn.J.A.(Worc
Clarke,Sir Edward(CityLondon
Coates, E. Feetham(Lewisham)
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Courthope, G. Loyd
Craig,Charles Curtis(Antrim,S.
Craig,Captain James(Down,E.
Craik, Sir Henry
Dalrymple, Viscount
Dixon-Hartland,Sir FredDixon
Doughty, Sir George
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Du Cros, Harvey
Duncan,Robert(Lanark,Govan
Faber, George Denison (York)
Fardell, Sir T. George
Fell, Arthur
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Gardner, Ernest (Berks, East)
Gibbs, G. A. (Bristol, West)
Gordon, J (Londonderry, S.)
Gordon,Sir W.Evans-(T'rHam.
Haddock, George R.
Hambro, Charles Eric
Hamilton, Marquess of
Hardy,Laurence(Kent,Ashford
Harrison-Broadley, Col. H. B.
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Heaton, John Henniker
Helmsley, Viscount
Hervey,F.W.F.(BuryS.Edm'ds
Hill, Sir Clement (Shrewsbury)
Hill, Henry Staveley (Staff'sh.)
Hills, J. W.
Houston, Robert Paterson
Hunt, Rowland
Kennaway,Rt.Hn. Sir John H.
Kenyon-Slaney,Rt. Hn. Col.W.
Kimber, Sir Henry
King,Sir Henry Seymour(Hull)
Lambton, Hon. Frederick Wm.
Lee,Arthur H(Hants.,Fareham
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Liddell, Henry
Lockwood,Rt.Hn.Lt.-Col. A.R.
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lowe, Sir Francis William
MacIver, David (Liverpool)
Magnus, Sir Philip
Marks, Harry Hananel (Kent)
Mason, James F. (Windsor)
Meysey-Thompson,Major E.C.
Mildmay, Francis Bingham
Morpeth, Viscount
Muntz, Sir Philip A.
Nield, Herbert
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Parker,Sir Gilbert (Gravesend)
Parkes, Ebenezer
Pease,Herbert Pike(Darlington
Percy, Earl
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Ratcliff, Major R. F.
Rawlinson, John Frederick P.
Remnant, James Farquharson
Roberts,S.(Sheffield,Ecclesall)
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Rothschild, Hon. Lionel Walter
Rutherford, W. W. (Liverpool)
Sandys, Lieut.-Col.Thos.Myles
Sassoon, Sir Edward Albert
Scott, Sir S. (Marylebone, W.)
Sloan, Thomas Henry
Smith,Abel H.(Hertford, East)
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (Strand)
Stanley, Hn. Arthur(Ormskirk
Starkey, John R.
Stone, Sir Benjamin
Talbot,Rt.Hn.J.G.(Oxf'dUniv
Thomson, W. Mitchell-(Lanark
Thornton, Percy M.
Turnour, Viscount
Vincent, Col. Sir C. E. Howard
Walker, Col.W.H.(Lancashire)
Walrond, Hon. Lionel
Williamson, G. H. (Worcester)
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Wilson, A. Stanley(York,E.R.)
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C.B. Stuart
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George
Younger, George

TELLERS FOR THE NOES.—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Mr. Forster.

Main Question put accordingly.

The House divided: Ayes, 474; Noes, 98. (Division List No. 14).

AYES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
Abraham, William (Rhondda)
Acland, Francis Dyke
Adkins, W. Ryland
Agar-Robartes, Hon. T. C.
Agnew, George William
Ainsworth, John Stirling
Alden, Percy
Allen, A. Acland (Christchurch)
Allen, Charles P. (Gloucester)
Ambrose, Robert
Armitage, R
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Asquith, Rt. Hn. Herbert Henry
Astbury, John Meir
Atherley-Jones, L.
Baker, Sir John (Portsmouth)
Baker, Joseph A. (Finsbury, E.
Balfour, Robert (Lanark)
Baring, Godfrey (Isle of Wight)
Barker, John
Barlow, John E. (Somerset)
Barlow, Percy (Bedford)
Barnard, E. B.
Barnes, G. N.
Barran, Rowland Hirst
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Beale, W. P.
Beauchamp, E.
Beaumont, W. C. B. (Hexham)
Beck, A. Cecil
Bell, Richard
Bellairs, Carlyon
Belloc, Hiliare Joseph Peter R.
Benn, John Williams (Devonp't
Benn, W. (T'w'rH'mlets, S. Geo.
Bennett, E. N.
Berridge, T. H. D.
Bertram, Julius
Bethell, J. H. (Essex, Romford)
Bethell, T. R. (Essex, Maldon)
Billson, Alfred
Birrell, Rt. Hon. Augustine
Black, Arthur W. (Bedfordshire
Boland, John
Bolton, T. D. (Derbyshire, N.E.)
Bottomley, Horatio
Bowles, G. Stewart
Brace, William
Branch, James
Brigg, John
Broadhurst, Henry
Brocklehurst, W. D.
Brodie, H. C.
Brooke, Stopford
Brunner. J. F. L. (Lancs., Leigh
Brunner, Sir John T. (Cheshire)
Bryce, Rt. Hn. James (Aberdeen
Bryce, J. A. (Inverness Burghs)
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Buckmaster, Stanley O.
Burke, E. Haviland
Burns, Rt. Hon. John
Burnyeat, J. D. W.
Burt, Rt. Hon. Thomas
Buxton, Rt. Hn. Sydney Charles
Byles, William Pollard

Cairns, Thomas
Caldwell, James
Cameron, Robert
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H.
Carr-Gomm, H. W.
Causton, Rt. Hn. Richard Knight
Cawley, Frederick
Cecil, Lord R. (Marylebone, E.)
Chance, Frederick William
Channing, Francis Allston
Cheetham, John Frederick
Cherry, R. R.
Churchill, Winston Spencer
Clancy, John Joseph
Clarke, C. Goddard (Peckham)
Cleland, J. W.
Clough, W.
Coats, Sir T. Glen (Renfrew, W.)
Cobbold, Felix Thornley
Cogan, Denis J.
Collins, Stephen (Lambeth)
Collins, Sir Wm. J. (S. Pancras, W
Cooper, G. J.
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Corbett, C. H. (Sussex, E. Grins' d
Cornwall, Sir Edwin A.
Cory, Clifford John
Cotton, Sir H. J. S.
Cowan, W. H.
Cox, Harold
Craig, Herbert J. (Tynemouth)
Crean, Eugene
Cremer, William Randal
Crombie, John William
Crooks, William
Crosfield, A. H.
Cross, Alexander
Crossley, William J.
Cullinan, J.
Dalmeny, Lord
Dalziel, James Henry
Davies, M. Vaughan-(Cardigan
Davies, Timothy (Fulham)
Davies, W. Howell (Bristol, S.)
Delany, William
Devlin, Charles Ramsay (Galway
Dewar, Arthur (Edinburgh, S.)
Dickinson, W. H. (St. Pancras, N.
Dickson-Poynder, Sir John P.
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Dillon, John
Dobson, Thomas W.
Dolan, Charles Joseph
Donelan, Captain A.
Duckworth, James
Duffy, William J.
Duncan, C. (Barrow-in-Furness
Duncan, J. H. (York, Otley)
Dunn, A. Edward (Camborne)
Dunne, Major E. M. (Walsall)
Edwards, Enoch (Hanley)
Edwards, Frank (Radnor)
Elibank, Master of
Ellis, Rt. Hon. John Edward
Erskine, David C.
Esmonde, Sir Thomas
Essex, R. W.

Evans, Samuel T.
Eve, Harry Trelawney
Everett, R. Lacey
Fenwick, Charles
Ferens, T. R.
Ferguson, R. C. Munro
Ffrench, Peter
Field, William
Fiennes, Hon. Eustace
Findlay, Alexander
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Flynn, James Christopher
Foster, Rt. Hon. Sir Walter
Fowler, Rt. Hon. Sir Henry
Fuller, J. M. F.
Fullerton, Hugh
Furness, Sir Christopher
Gardner, Col. A. (Hereford, S.)
Gibb, James (Harrow)
Gilhooly, James
Gill, A. H.
Ginnell, L.
Gladstone, Rt. Hn. Herbert John
Glover, Thomas
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Gooch, George Peabody
Grant, Corrie
Greenwood, G. (Peterborough)
Greenwood, Hamar (York)
Grey, Rt. Hon. Sir Edward
Grove, Archibald
Guest, Hon. Ivor Churchill
Gulland, John W.
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Haldane, Rt. Hon. Richard B.
Hall, Frederick
Halpin, J.
Hammond, John
Harcourt, Rt. Hon. Lewis
Hardie, J. Keir (Merthyr Tydvil
Hardie, George A. (Suffolk)
Harmsworth, Cecil B. (Worc.)
Harmsworth, R. L. (Caithness)
Harrington, Timothy
Hart-Davies, T.
Harvey, A. G. C. (Rochdale)
Harwood, George
Halam, James (Derbyshire)
Haslam, Lewis (Monmouth)
Haworth, Arthur A.
Hazel, Dr. A. E.
Hazleton, Richard
Healy, Timothy Michael
Hedges, A. Paget
Helme, Norval Watson
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Henderson, J. M. (Aberdeen, W.)
Henry, Charles S.
Herbert, Colonel Ivor, (Mon. S.
Herbert, T. Arnold (Wycombe)
Higham, John Sharp
Hobart, Sir Robert
Hobhouse, Charles E. H.
Hodge, John
Hogan, Michael
Holden, E. Hopkinson
Holland, Sir William Henry

Hooper, A. G.
Hope, John Deans (Fife, West)
Hope, W. Bateman (Somerset, N.
Horniman, Emslie John
Horridge, Thomas Gardiner
Howard, Hon. Geoffrey
Hudson, Walter
Hutton, Alfred Eddison
Hyde, Clarendon
Idris, T. H. W.
Illingworth, Percy H.
Isaacs, Rufus Daniel
Jackson, R. S.
Jacoby, James Alfred
Jardine, Sir J.
Jenkins, J.
Johnson, John (Gateshead)
Johnson, W. (Nuneaton)
Jones, David Brynmor (Swansea
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Jones, William (Carnarvonshire
Jowett, F. W.
Joyce, Michael
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kekewich, Sir George
Kelley, George D.
Kennedy, Vincent Paul
Kilbride, Denis
Kincaid-Smith, Captain
King, Alfred John (Knutsford)
King, Sir Henry Seymour (Hull
Kitson, Sir James
Laidlaw, Robert
Lamb, Ernest H. (Rochester)
Lambert, George
Lambton, Hon. Frederick Wm.
Lamont, Norman
Law, Hugh Alexander
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Lea, Hugh Cecil (St. Pancras, E.
Leese, Sir Joseph F. (Accrington)
Lehmann, R. C.
Lever, A. Levy (Essex, Harwich
Lever, W. H. (Cheshire, Wirral)
Levy, Maurice
Lewis, John Herbert
Lloyd-George, Rt. Hon. David
Lough, Thomas
Lundon, W.
Lupton, Arnold
Luttrell, Hugh Courteney
Lyell, Charles Henry
Lynch, H. B.
Macdonald, J. R. (Leicester)
Macdonald, J. M. (Falkirk B'ghs
Mackarness, Frederic C.
Maclean, Donald
Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
Macpherson, J. T.
MacVeagh, Jeremiah (Down, S.
MacVeigh, Charles (Donegal, E.
M'Arthur, William
M'Callum, John M.
M'Crae, George
M'Kean, John
M'Kenna, Reginald
M'Laren, Sir C. B. (Leicester)
M'Laren, H. D. (Stafford) W.)
M'Micking, Major G.
Maddison, Frederick

Mallet, Charles E.
Manfield, Harry (Northants)
Mansfield, H. Rendall (Lincoln)
Markham, Arthur Basil
Marks, G. Croydon (Launceston)
Marnham, F. J.
Mason, A. E. W. (Coventry)
Massie, J.
Masterman, C. F. G.
Meehan, Patrick A.
Menzies, Walter
Micklem, Nathaniel
Molteno, Percy Alfred
Mond, A.
Money, L. G. Chiozza
Montgomery, H. H.
Mooney, J. J.
Morgan, G. Hay (Cornwall)
Morley, Rt. Hon. John
Morrell, Philip
Morse, L. L.
Morton, Alpheus Cleophas
Murphy, John
Murray, James
Napier, T. B.
Newnes, F. (Notts, Bassetlaw)
Newnes, Sir George (Swansea)
Nicholls, George
Nicholson, Charles N. (Doncas'r
Nolan, Joseph
Norman, Henry
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
Nussey, Thomas Willans
Nuttall, Harry
O'Brien, Kendal (Tipperary Mid
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Brien, William (Cork)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W.
O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
O'Doherty, Philip
O'Donnell, C. J. (Walworth)
O'Dowd, John
O'Hare, Patrick
O'Kelly, Conor (Mayo, N.)
O'Kelly, James (Roscommon, N
O'Malley, William
O Mara, James
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
Palmer, Sir Charles Mark
Paul, Herbert
Paulton, James Mellor
Pearce, Robert (Staffs. Leek)
Pearce, William (Limehouse)
Pearson, Sir Weetman D.
Perks, Robert William
Philipps, Col. Ivor (S'thampton
Philipps, J. Wynford (Pembroke
Philipps, Owen C. (Pembroke)
Pickersgill, Edward
Pirie, Duncan V.
Pollard, Dr.
Power, Patrick Joseph
Price, C. E. (Edinb'gh, Central)
Price, Robert John (Norfolk, E.)
Priestley, Arthur (Grantham.
Priestley, W. E. B. (Bradford, E)
Radford, G. H.
Rainy, A. Rolland
Raphael, Herbert H.
Rea, Russell (Gloucester)
Rea, Walter Russell (Scarboro'

Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Redmond, William (Clare)
Rees, J. D.
Rendall, Athelstan
Renton, Major Leslie
Richards, Thomas (W. Monm'th
Richards, T. F. (Wolverh'mptn
Richardson, A.
Rickett, J. Compton
Ridsdale, E. A.
Roberts, Charles H. (Lincoln)
Roberts, G. H. (Norwich)
Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Robertson, Rt. Hn. E. (Dundee)
Robertson, J. M. (Tyneside)
Robertson, Sir G. Scott (Bradf'rd
Robinson, S.
Robson, Sir William Snowdon
Roche, Augustine (Cork)
Roche, John (Galway, East)
Roe, Sir Thomas
Rose, Charles Day
Rothschild, Hon. Lionel Walter
Rowlands, J.
Runciman, Walter
Rutherford, V. H. (Brentford
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland
Samuel, S. M. (Whitechapel
Scarisbrick, T. T. L.
Schwann, C. Duncan (Hyde)
Schwann, Chas. E. (Manchester
Scott, A. H. (Ashton under Lyne
Sears, J. E.
Seaverns, J. H.
Seddon, J.
Seely, Major J. B.
Shackleton, David James
Shaw, Charles Edw. (Stafford
Shaw, Rt. Hon. T. (Hawick B.
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Sheehy, David
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Silcock, Thomas Ball
Simon, John Allsebrook
Sinclair, Rt. Hon. John
Smeaton, Donald Mackenzie
Smyth, Thomas (Leitrim, S.)
Snowden, P.
Soares, Ernest J.
Spicer, Albert
Stanger, H. Y.
Stanley, Hn. A. Lyulph (Chesh.
Steadman, W. C.
Stevenson, Francis S.
Stewart, Halley (Greenock)
Stewart-Smith, D. (Kendal)
Strachey, Sir Edward
Straus, B. S. (Mile End)
Strauss, E. A. (Abingdon)
Stuart, James (Sunderland)
Sullivan, Donal
Summerbell, T.
Sutherland, J. E.
Taylor, Austin (East Toxteth)
Taylor, John W. (Durham)
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
Tennant, E. P. (Salisbury)
Tennant, H. J. (Berwickshire)
Thomas, Abel (Carmarthen, E.)
Thomas, Sir A. (Glamorgan, E.)

Thomas, David Alfred (Merthyr
Thompson, J. W. H. (Somerset, E
Thorne, William
Thornton, Percy M.
Tillett, Louis John
Tomkinson, James
Torrance, A. M.
Toulmin, George
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Verney, F. W.
Villiers, Ernest Amherst
Vivian, Henry
Wadsworth, J.
Waldron, Laurence Ambrose
Walker, H. De R. (Leicester)
Wallace, Robert
Walsh, Stephen
Walters, John Tudor
Walton, Sir John L. (Leeds, S.)
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
Ward, John (Stoke upon Trent
Ward, W. Dudley (Southamptn
Wardle, George J.
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Wason, Eugene (Clackmannan
Wason, John Cathcart (Orkney
Waterlow, D. S.
Watt, H. Anderson
Wedgwood, Josiah C.
Weir, James Galloway
Whitbread, Howard
White, George (Norfolk)
White, Luke (York, E.R.)
White, Patrick (Meath, North
White, J. D. (Dumbartonshire
Whitehead, Rowland
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Wiles, Thomas
Wilkie, Alexander
Williams, J. (Glamorgan)
Williams, Osmond (Merioneth)
Williams, W. L. (Carmarthen)
Williamson, A. (Elgin and Nairn
Wills, Arthur Walters
Wilson, C. H. W. (Hull, W.)
Wilson, Henry J. (York, W. R.)
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid)
Wilson, J. H. (Middlesbrough)
Wilson, J. W. (Worcestersh. N.)
Wilson, P. W. (St. Pancras, S.)
Wilson, W. T. (Westhoughton)
Winfrey, R.
Wodehouse, Lord (Norfolk, Mid)
Wood, T. M'Kinnon
Woodhouse, Sir J T. (Huddersf'd
Young, Samuel
Yoxall, James Henry

Tellers for the Ayes—Mr. George Whiteley and Mr. J. A. Pease.

NOES.

Anstruther-Gray, Major
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster, Rt Hn Hugh O.
Aubrey-Fletcher, Rt. Hn. Sir H.
Balcarres, Lord
Baldwin, Alfred
Balfour, Rt Hn. A. J. (City Lond.
Balfour, Capt. C. B. (Hornsey)
Banner, John S. Harmood
Baring, Hon. Guy (Winchester)
Barrie, H. T. (Londonderry, N.)
Beckett, Hon. Gervase
Boyle, Sir Edward
Bridgeman, W. Clive
Bull, Sir William James
Burdett-Coutts, W.
Butcher, Samuel Henry
Campbell, J. H. M. (Dublin Univ
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Castlereagh, Viscount
Cave, George
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Cecil, Lord J. P. J. (Stamford)
Chamberlain, Rt. Hn. J. (Birm.
Chamberlain, Rt Hn. J. A. (Worc
Coates, E. Feetham (Lewisham
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Courthope, G. Loyd
Craig, Captain James (Down, E.)
Craik, Sir Henry
Dalrymple, Viscount
Dixon-Hartland, Sir Fred Dixon
Doughty, Sir George
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Du Cros, Harvey
Duncan, Robert (Lanark, Govan
Faber, George Denison (York)
Fardell, Sir T. George
Fell, Arthur
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Gardner, Ernest (Berks, East)
Gibbs, G. A. (Bristol, West)
Gordon, J. (Londonderry, S.)
Gordon, Sir W Evans- (T'r Ham.
Haddock, George R.
Hambro, Charles Eric
Hamilton, Marquess of
Hardy, Laurence (Kent, Ashford
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Heaton, John Henniker
Hervey, F. W. F. (Bury S. Edm'ds
Hill, Sir Clement (Shrewsbury)
Hill, Henry Staveley (Staff'sh.)
Hills, J. W.
Houston, Robert Paterson
Hunt, Rowland
Kenyon-Slaney, Rt. Hon. Col. W.
Kimber, Sir Henry
Lee, Arthur H (Hants., Fareham
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Liddell, Henry
Lockwood, Rt Hn. Lt. Col. A. R.
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lowe, Sir Francis William
MacIver, David (Liverpool)
Marks, Harry Hananel (Kent)
Mason, James F. (Windsor)
Meysey-Thompson, Major E. C.
Morpeth, Viscount
Muntz, Sir Philip A.
Nield, Herbert
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Parker, Sir Gilbert (Gravesend)
Parkes, Ebenezer
Pease, Herbert Pike (Darlington
Percy, Earl
Ratcliff, Major R. F.
Rawlinson, John Frederick P.
Remnant, James Farquharson
Roberts, S. (Sheffield, Ecclesall)
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Rutherford, W. W. (Liverpool)
Sandys, Lieut.-Col. Thos. Myles
Scott, Sir S. (Marylebone, W.)
Sloan, Thomas Henry
Stanley, Hn. Arthur (Ormskirk
Starkey, John R.
Stone, Sir Benjamin
Thomson, W. Mitchell (Lanark)
Turnour, Viscount
Vincent, Col. Sir C. E. Howard
Walker, Col. W. H. (Lancashire
Williamson, G. H. (Worcester)
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Wilson, A. Stanley (York, E.R.)
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George

Tellers for the Noes—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Mr. Forster.

Resolved, That this House, recognising that in the recent general election the people of the United Kingdom have demonstrated their unqualified fidelity to the principles and practice of free trade, deems it right to record its determination to resist any proposal, whether by way of taxation upon foreign corn or of the creation of a general tariff upon foreign goods, to create in this country a system of protection.

EVENING SITTING.

[Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER in the Chair.]

LONDON COUNTY BUILDINGS BILL.

Order for Second Reading read.

*COLONEL LEGGE (St. George's, Hanover Square) said that he intended not to oppose this Bill but merely to offer a few remarks and to ask for a little information upon it before it went to its Second Reading. The London County Council, it was true, were extremely badly housed at present as regards the buildings in which they carry on the business of the Council and which they had acquired for the use of the staff. When he was a member of the County Council he supported a scheme for the acquisition of a site in Spring Gardens, and since then other sites had been brought forward, the Parliament Street site, the Adelphi site and the site which they proposed to acquire under this Bill. The present site had much to recommend it, but he was exceedingly doubtful whether this was an opportune time to incur the expenditure in view of the present and future commitments of the County Council. He agreed that they should have buildings worthy of the work they had to carry on, and certainly should have better municipal buildings than they had in Spring Gardens. This Bill asked for a sum of £655,000, for, he understood, the site on which it was proposed to erect a building for the conduct of the business of the County Council and the necessary embankment. That sum did not include the cost of the buildings, which, he understood, would be something like £1,500,000 more. The County Council debt in 1889 was £17,500,000, in 1899 it was £21,500,000, and in 1905, when the County Council had assumed the control of education in London, it was £33,000,000. He did not desire to oppose the Bill, but he should like to obtain from the hon. Member in charge of it some assurance that this enormous expenditure would in some way or another eventually bring about a saving in the expense to which the Council was at present put in respect of buildings, and that the Council were acting, in the words of Lord Welby, the chairman of its Finance Committee, "prudently, soundly, and in a businesslike way."

*SIR EDWIN CORNWALL (Bethnal Green N.E.) said that this was a Bill to enable the London County Council to acquire under the Land Clauses Consolidation Act certain lands upon which it was desired to erect buildings suitable for the work which the London County Council had to carry on. Under the powers given to the London County Council under the Local Government Act of 1888, they had already arranged to purchase two-thirds of the property upon which it was proposed to erect these buildings, and it was only when they came to the House for powers to acquire the other one-third that his hon. friend desired to know whether they had considered if this was an opportune time for the work to be taken in hand. The hon. Member for St. George's, Hanover Square, based his question on what he described as the debt of the Council in 1889 and the debt of the Council at the present time. His hon. friend had rather misled the House; he should, when stating the debt of the Council in 1889 and the increase at the present time, have taken into consideration the debt of the old School Board in 1889. He would then have found that the total increase in the debt of the London County Council during the last ten years had not exceeded £800,000, which included the cost of the great street from Holborn to the Strand, and also the improvements in Westminster, both of which were expected to work out in the future at a profit, so that there would be no charge upon the rates. There was another debt of £3,500,000 upon the tramways, but that also was a remunerative expenditure. Therefore if the hon. Member had looked carefully into this matter he would have seen that there was no ground for alarm. He did not hold that either Parliament or any other public body should be careless of its debt, and he ventured to draw the attention of the House to the debt of London in March as compared with that of other municipalities in relation to the rateable value. London's total debt in March was 155 per cent. on the rateable value; Liverpool, 300·00; Manchester, 595·3; Birmingham, 546·05; Leeds, 577·90; Sheffield, 519·76 Bradford, 490·02; Salford, 361·04; Cardiff, 328·67; Preston, 498·81; Huddersfield, 730·23. A good deal had been said about the rates in London, but, apart from education, the total increase in the County Council rates in the last ten years, after allowing for the falling off of the Exchequer contribution in net relief of rates, did not exceed 2d. in the pound, so that when there was an outcry about the enormous increase of rates, it would be worth while to look to some other cause of the increase than the Council. The Bill was not one to enable the Council to erect buildings; that power was already given by Parliament. It only authorised the purchase of a site. The cost of the site which had been selected would be about £600,000, and the probable cost of the buildings would be £1,056,000. It was necessary in the public interest that the County Council should not continue to carry on its enormous responsibilities and duties in the present unsuitable premises. It was essential in the public interests that the County Council should provide itself with a proper office to carry out its business. Parliament had devolved upon it tremendous responsibilities involving in maintenance alone £10,000,000 a year. No talk of extravagance or economy would materially alter that figure and make it less or more, and, if they went into the question of the grants which had to be made to various local authorities, the annual amount arose to some £15,000,000 or £16,000,000. He reminded the House not only of the deplorable conditions under which the County Council staff had to work, but of the fact that great public inconvenience arose from the existing state of things. The staff of the Council at the central offices numbered approximately 1,950, of whom 525 were located in the main building, and 1,425 in twenty-five separate buildings at various distances away from the main building, the education offices being as far as 1,530 yards away. There were twenty departments, and some of them were housed in several separate buildings. The architects' department occupied seven buildings, while parts of three more buildings were used to house the architect (education). The Department of the Clerk of the Council was housed in five buildings, the comptroller in four and the engineers in four. For all these scattered premises rent or the equivalent of rent was being paid to the amount of £38,765 per annum, and that sum was an increasing item. During the life of the Metropolitan Board of Works they had been considering sites and ever since. During the last ten years they had considered sites varying in cost from £2,000,000 for two acres down to the cost of the present site of £600,000 for five acres. He thought, indeed, that his hon. friend, instead of asking for further information, ought to have congratulated them on having found so good and cheap a property. For his part he did not know, if they did not secure this, where they were to go and get a site at anywhere near this price. The present site was the best and cheapest which the Council had had before it. It would occupy about 800 feet, facing the river, and would be about two-thirds of the length of St. Thomas's Hospital. It would be a great improvement to that part of London and would be of great public utility. Under the present conditions it was not only the enormous and increasing staff that suffered, but the public itself.

SIR EDWARD CLARKE (City of London) said he desired that the London County Council, which was discharging an enormous public work, should be fitly and economically housed. He quite recognised that the conditions under which it did its work at present were not consistent with economy, and certainly had not the dignity which ought to belong to such a body. The site now chosen appeared to him to be one which would not only give adequate room for the establishment of the Council, but would also be as economical as possible. At present over £30,000 a year was spent by the County Council in rental, and after spending that sum it was housed in a haphazard and inconvenient fashion, the departments being scattered about in different places and working under onerous and difficult conditions. The figure represented something more than interest on the sum it was proposed to the spend upon the building and site. He was not sure, however, that the ultimate expenditure would be within the limits at present indicated by the figures which had been given; but, at all events, it was desirable that in a great place like London —something between a city and a province—with its variety of interests and enormous responsibilities, a great public body discharging public functions should be properly housed. He cordially accepted and supported the Bill before the House.

Second Reading agreed to.

IRISH FISHING INDUSTRY.

*Mr. BOLAND (Kerry, S.) rose to call attention to the fishing industry in Ireland; and to move—"That the condition of Irish fisheries is unsatisfactory and demands the early attention of the Government." He did not intend, he said, to give a lot of statistics with regard to this matter, but he would give a comparison, first of all, between England, Ireland, and Scotland, as regarded the fishing industry. In England and Wales in the course of ten months up to the end of October, 1905, the fishing represented a value of £5,959,141. In Scotland, for the same period, it was £2,463,531. In Ireland for a period of eleven months, up to 20th November, 1905, the value was only £308,703. That was to say, roughly, the catch of fish off the Irish coast was only one-eighth that of Scotland, and one-nineteenth that of England and Wales. He thought those figures would be in themselves sufficient to prove his contention that the condition of the Irish fishing industry was unsatisfactory and demanded the early attention of the Government. From the last report of the Department of Agriculture in Ireland, which Department embraced the fisheries, he found that there were only 25,000 men and boys engaged in the industry, the total number of vessels being 6,235. His first claim was, that in order to put the fisheries of Ireland upon a proper basis there should be done what was done in every other country in the world which properly looked after its fishing, and that was to supply the West coast of Ireland with at least one gunboat or torpedo destroyer to cope with the illegalities carried on by trawlers and foreign vessels. At the present time there were only two vessels, the "Helga" and the "Granuaile," engaged in the work for the whole coast of Ireland, and when he asked the Chief Secretary a few days ago what was the speed of these two vessels, the right hon. Gentleman replied that it was not advisable in the public good to give the actual speed. That was quite sufficient for the contention he was now making. He knew these boats were not sufficiently rapid to keep up with the trawlers which were engaged in illegal practices. Germany, in addition to a special cruiser, had two torpedo boats told off all the year round to look after its fisheries. The least that the British Government could do in return for what Ireland did in the way of keeping up the British Navy was to detach one or two torpedo boats or fast gunboats in order to supplement the two inefficient boats at present engaged in the business. The Fishery Board of the Department of Agriculture was not at present properly manned. There ought to be on the Board a man who was a thorough expert on sea fisheries, and until that was done he did not think that the Board could properly discharge its functions. As a matter of fact there was a great deal of overlapping of functions in the Department of Agriculture and the Congested Districts Board. For example, over three years ago the late Chief Secretary introduced the Marine Works Act, under which the sum of £100,000 was allocated to be spent on the West coast of Ireland in building piers and harbours. In Kerry so far not a penny of this money had been spent, although when the Bill was going through the House the late Chief Secretary suggested that a sum of £1,000 should be contributed under the Bill, £1,000 from the Department of Agriculture, and £1,000 from the Congested Districts Board in order to complete a pier at Reenard Point. Nothing had been done, and he put it down to the fact that there were two or three departments in Ireland, and they put people off by one department saying that another department was not ready. If there were on the Congested Districts Board a representative from Kerry and a representative from Cork, Reenard Point would have been put into a satisfactory condition many years ago. He hoped all these departments would now put their heads together and come to some arrangement by which Kerry could take advantage of the Marine Works Act. If there had been a regular expert on the Fisheries Board in Ireland, he believed long before this that country would have had what Scotland had—and he presumed every country in which the fishing industry was looked properly after had—and that was a brand by which cured mackerel and herring was known all the world over. This would repay itself. If a charge, as in Scotland, of 4d. a barrel were imposed for the branding it would probably be sufficient not only to pay the expenses of the inspectors who had to carry out the branding, but also to leave a margin. A particular reason at the present moment for urging this question of branding was the fact that Ireland was going to have a national trade mark for produce and manufactures, although it was a question for consideration whether the brand for cured fish should be the national trade mark, or differently administered. At all events, it was time that a brand should be adopted, to enable Irish cured herrings and mackerel to take their distinct position. There was another matter he should like to bring to the attention of the Chief Secretary, although it was also, he agreed, in the nature of an experiment. A little time ago in Denmark and Norway experiments were carried out in fitting small motors to fishing boats, and the Scottish Office issued in March last year a very interesting report as to the application of motors to fishing boats in Scotland. So far as he knew there had been no experiment of the kind made in Ireland. Denmark and Norway were not only turning out motors for their own fishing boats, but were supplying Germany and other countries, and it was certainly time that in Ireland there should be a Government Department abreast of other countries in regard to these experiments. He had conversed with a fisherman in Kerry who was quite willing that an experiment should be made with his boats. The report to the Scottish Office on the application of motor power to fishing boats, by Lieutenant Mansfield Cumming, R.N., contained the following—

> "In summarising the results of my work in Scotland, I should state that I am of opinion that the adoption of motor power in the present boats would be of great benefit to the owners and the fishing industry in general. I see no difficulty from either the shipbuilders' or engineers' point of view that cannot be got over, and I believe that I have found in Denmark a type of motor suitable in every respect for the work required in Scotland. I trust that it may be found possible to try one or more of these at the earlist opportunity."

With regard to this question of motors, he made no claim that they wanted in Ireland all fishing boats at present to be worked by motors. It was purely as an auxiliary. If a large fishing boat were fitted with a ten horse power motor, enabling it to go three knots an hour in a calm, it would make all the difference if it were hurrying to catch the fish train. To sum up he demanded assistance from the Navy in the protection of Irish Fisheries, the application of the Marine Works Act to Reenard near Cahirciveen, county Kerry, the institution of a brand for cured mackerel and herring, and the making of an experiment in the matter of motors as applicable to fishing boats. The question of inland fisheries would be dealt with by the hon. Member for Limerick City. He moved the Resolution standing in his name.

MR. JOYCE (Limerick) in seconding, endorsed what his hon. friend had said with regard to the watching of the Irish coast line. He was surprised the other day when the Chief Secretary for Ireland said it would not be for the public good that the speed of the boats, detailed by the department to watch illegal trawlers, should be known by the men on those trawlers, seeing that they must know their speed perfectly well. He wished to impress upon the Chief Secretary that the coast line of Ireland was 2,200 miles in length, and how could two boats, even if they were fast boats, watch that coast? It would require at least six boats, but they would be content with four; and they should be at least two or three knots faster than any steam trawler, so that there would be no possibilty of escape for the men who tried to trawl illegally. He had seen French mackerel boats with a trail of nets a mile or more in length shot across the mouth of the River Shannon, and he did not think there was an English gun-boat within hundreds of miles, unless it was snugly ensconced in harbour. It was impossible for the coastguards stationed on the West Coast to do the policing of the coast.

MR. BRYCE: Will the hon. Member tell me whether these French boats were within the three-mile limit?

MR. JOYCE said they were. Although the Shannon was eleven miles wide at the mouth, they were well within the headlands which defined the mouth of the river. He had seen them there dozens of times. Last year the sea fisheries of Ireland produced a sum of nearly £400,000, and the inland fisheries —salmon and trout—about the same amount. With a little trouble, and perhaps some expense, he failed to see why this amount could not be increased to millions a year, in a very short time. He looked upon the sea and inland fisheries as a mine of wealth, if properly worked and looked after. Five years ago he observed that the "Parliamentary Companion," a book which professed to give a description of all Members of the House, said of him that his views on fishing were well known: he would have no close time at all. The gentleman who wrote that, knew very little about his views. He was altogether wrong, and must have got his information second hand. The inland fisheries in Ireland had been dwindling away, the number of men employed in the industry were becoming less and less every year, and one of the reasons was that the law as administered in Ireland was judge-made law, in the interests of the rich man and against the poor man. The Board of Conservators in Ireland were elected from one class only, and that class was the riparian and weir owners; and the elections were carried out in such a manner that the poor fishermen could never get any representation on those boards, because the gentlemen who controlled the elections carried them out by proxy voting, and they could do as was done on the Stock Exchange: bull and bear the market at their will. When the triennial elections came round, these gentlemen by their proxy votes swamped the fishermen's votes. He hoped that, now that they were going to be governed according to Irish ideas, this matter would have the serious attention of the Chief Secretary. There were three phases in this question. One was, what could be done to propagate and renew the fish? He thought that with very little expense that could be done. There were a few hatcheries in Ireland, and he only wished they were at least ten times more in number. There was another thing, and that was the conserving of the fish during the close time and in the proper places. When the fish went up to the spawning they got into the small rivers, where no bailiff could possibly be; and the farmers' servants, boys and girls, went down with pitch-forks, where the water was not twelve inches deep, and pitched the fish, which were not fit to be eaten at the time, on the bank by the score, and they were used to manure the land more than anything else. He suggested that at the mouth of those small rivers there should be a grating erected at a certain time of the year, that it should remain for a certain time, and that one man should be employed to watch it and to clear it, when necessary, of weeds and trees. Thus they would prevent thousands of fish, and millions upon millions of spawn, from being destroyed. Then the public rights of fishing with the rod and line were being filched away by owners of fisheries, which he believed had been bought out long ago from their forefathers by Government money, and which had been allowed by the Board of Works without a word of protest to revert back to their descendants. Poor men who wanted to enjoy a few hours amusement with the rod and line had been driven from the banks of the river at Limerick by the riparian owners, and threatened with legal proceedings if they persisted in fishing where from time immemorial the public had had a right to fish. The question was causing a great deal of excitement in Limerick, and poor men, who had tried to fight the case, when they won in the magisterial courts had been haled before the county court; and if they won there, then the men with plenty of money in their pockets took them from court to court, till finally they could not go any further, and judgment went against them by default. He had asked for a Return in order to prove that these fishing rights had been filched from the public. He was not surprised when the Conservative Government refused him the information, but he was surprised, and not agreeably, when this Liberal, Radical, and Home Rule Government, as they were called, refused it. While the Tory Party was in power they were always looking forward to being robbed of something or another, and when the Liberal Party came into power they allowed the Irish people to recoup a little that they might be ready again for plunder by the next Tory Government. In no case was that more evident than in the case of the Irish fisheries. Speaking on behalf of the fishermen, both above and below Limerick, he said that fifty years ago there were 157 boats and

471 men employed in the fishing industry, whereas to-day there were only thirty boats and ninety men employed. What an object lesson of British rule in Ireland that was! There were forty-four families depending upon snap-net fishing for their living, and the men would know the reason why before they were deprived of their livelihood and saw their wives and families starving on the roadside. He would not put it any stronger than that. He asked the Chief Secretary to grant them an impartial inquiry into all the merits of the case and to let right prevail and the truth come out. Let every man who wished be empowered to give evidence, and, if such an inquiry were granted, they hoped to be able to establish the right of the poor working-man to have his pleasure on the Sunday and enjoy himself for a few hours in innocent recreation.

Motion put, "That the condition of Irish fisheries is unsatisfactory and demands the early attention of the Government."—(*Mr. Boland.*)

*Mr. BARRIE (Londonderry, N.) said that in rising to address this honourable House for the first time he was glad to find himself in a position to agree at least in some measure with some of the grievances which had been put so eloquently before the House by the previous speakers. In the part of Ireland which he had the honour to represent they also had fisheries; and they also regretted that they were not more flourishing. In his Division they had been subjected from time to time to the visitation of foreign trawlers, and the local fishermen had suffered severely in consequence. If they had had gunboats or semi-gunboats, such as had been referred to, much good would have been done. The present watchboats had always been conspicuous by their absence when they were required. The fishermen had a distinct grievance. It was, however, one the redress of which should not give the Chief Secretary any great trouble or bewilderment. There were a good many torpedo boats which might fairly be detailed for this duty during the fishery season. Although he found himself in sympathy with a good deal that had fallen from the previous speakers, he was not able to agree entirely with them. He was not there to defend the boards of conservators; he did not even know the qualifications of the gentlemen who formed them; but he did know that they had important duties to discharge, and the membership should be closely scrutinised. It was absolutely necessary that the very important revenue with which they had to deal, and the interests they were required to protect, should not be lightly disturbed. They were told that there was now to be a national branding of the products of Irish fisheries and of other products and manufactures of Ireland. He did not gather whether the exact form of that brand had been decided upon, but he hoped it would not be one without the Crown on the top. He thought the branding should be undertaken by the Government in the same way as in Scotland. Anything that could be done by Government branding to raise the market standard of Irish fisheries should be done as soon as possible. He agreed that the shores of Ireland were rich in all kinds of fish, and if the fishing industry there was properly fostered it could be increased to a marvellous extent. He regretted that the fishing industry in Ireland did not give employment to as many men and boys as formerly, but he did not think the fishery laws had conduced to that result. There had been a natural fluctuation in the rivers which had diminished the supply of salmon in recent years, but he was informed that the prospects of the season now opening were excellent. They had been told how enterprising Germany was with regard to her fisheries, and he hoped the Chief Secretary would take an example from Germany in regard to what she was doing to foster the industries of her comparatively small shores. Ireland had more than 2,000 miles of shores, and the amount of the trade was totally disproportionate to the possibilities of that splendid fishing ground. He believed that there was a good deal of overlapping between the new Agricultural Board, the Congested Districts Board, and the Fisheries Board, and the sooner the Chief Secretary brought his influence to bear in regard to the expenditure of these bodies the better it would be for the public purse and the fisheries. The right hon. Gentleman had asked whether this illegal fishing had taken place within the three-mile limit. In the important fishing centre in his constituency this illegal trawling was carried on regularly close in shore by foreign trawlers, and a gunboat had not visited that part during the whole of the season. He did not think that the demand which had been put forward was at all unreasonable. The suggestion to place a trap at the mouths of the different rivers he thought was rather unreasonable, and, indeed, absurd. At the same time he agreed very fully as to the value of the hatcheries to which the hon. Member for Limerick had drawn attention. In the north of Ireland they had a most important hatchery on the river Bann, where millions of salmon were hatched and sent to populate other rivers which were not so rich in fish. The hon. Member for Limerick seemed already to be losing faith in what had been called this Home Rule Government. It was rather early in the day to find the hon. Member's faith in the Government receding.

MR. JOYCE: I never had any faith in any of you on either side.

*MR. BARRIE said he had no doubt that the representations which had been made would receive due consideration from the Chief Secretary. He should always give his support to any reform which he thought was in the interests of Ireland generally. He trusted that Nationalists would continue to indulge in the larger hope of the Government remedying all reasonable and legitimate grievances, and with those and with those only he desired to associate himself.

*MR. EDWARD BARRY (Cork County, S.) said that in the southern constituency which he represented there was a grievance of an acute and far-reaching character which had recently been very much ventilated in the local press. In the Skibbereen Press, letters, interviews, and leading articles had appeared calling attention to a grievance which, to the people in that part of Ireland, was a matter of life and death. Whatever might be said of the previous Chief Secretary, he had the greatest confidence that the present Chief Secretary during the probationary period intervening between the giving to Ireland of the full management of her own affairs would deal in a sympathetic spirit with the accumulation of wrong—doings and grievances which had been transmitted to him by his predecessor at the Irish Office. The grievance of which he complained was the unfair competition to which they were subjected by Norwegian fishermen. Up to about twelve months ago the southern fishermen enjoyed practically a monopoly of the American trade, but within the last twelve months, owing to the adoption of improved methods and a more expeditious system, the Norwegians had been able to secure a monopoly of the trade with America to the almost total exclusion of the Irish fishermen. Another disadvantage at which they were placed was due to the Scotch fishermen coming over to Irish waters a month earlier than they commenced operations on their own coast, and not alone catch herrings in an immature condition, but also mackerel in large quantities, and otherwise disturb and scare away large shoals of fish from the Irish coast. From Questions recently asked regarding this matter he found that a by-law was adopted some time ago with respect to part of the coast, and that it was afterwards withdrawn. But whether it was withdrawn or not made little difference, for it was never observed. With regard to the fishing industry in his own particular district in the south of Ireland, the fishermen plied their trade in open rowing boats and were at the greatest possible disadvantage owing to the lack of accommodation in the way of piers, slips, and other facilities for launching and securing their boats, and enabling them to go in and out at all states of the tide. Many suggestions as to the remedy had been made in the course of the correspondence and interviews to which he had referred. The experts who had made suggestions were not all agreed among themselves. He would suggest to the Chief Secretary the desirability of sending down to Skibbereen and the adjoining towns a competent inspector to interview the local fishermen and fish buyers and others who were conversant with the trade. When his Report was received some machinery could be devised for subsequent action with a view to a remedy. If the inspector would go down to Bishop Ross alone he would get as much information on the subject, both practical and statistical, as he would be able to digest. He was a prelate who took a deep interest in the growing of early potatoes and violets, the breeding of high-class hunters, and all matters appertaining to the improvement of the locality. Or better still if the right hon. Gentleman could see his way to take advantage of the approaching holidays to pay a visit to the district he would have an advantage over some of the inspectors inasmuch as he would be able to converse with the fishermen in their native tongue. Another matter which should be included in the scope of the inquiry was the want of railway accommodation, which was a great obstacle to the development of the fishing and other industries in that part of the country. If the right hon. Gentleman would visit the district he would see the necessity for improved piers and harbours, and he would be better able to devise some plan for enabling the people to grapple with the competition with which they were face to face.

*MR. FFRENCH (Wexford, S.) said his constituency lying between Wexford and Waterford harbours, and between the rivers Slaney and Barrow, was almost surrounded by water. Hence they were deeply interested in the development of the Irish fisheries. In his memory the rivers Slaney and Barrow were good salmon streams, but in recent years they had become depleted of the fish. He believed this was also the case in regard to other rivers in Ireland. He had over and over again called the attention of the House to this matter, and as a remedy he had suggested that each of the principal rivers of Ireland should be furnished with salmon hatcheries. He believed that the Board of Agriculture had been making or was contemplating some experiments in this direction. Nothing had been done however, in regard to the rivers bounding his constituency, and he hoped the Board would give some attention to them in future. In his opinion the first reason for the depletion of the rivers of salmon was the destruction of fish coming up the river to spawn and the destruction of the fry of the salmon that happened to escape. He considered it was very easy to deal with this matter. The fishery laws required to be amended so as to make salmon poaching a criminal offence. The police should be able to prosecute on their own initiative without the interference of the conservators. Now that the police were being reduced in Ireland, and many of the constabulary barracks were vacant, there was no excuse for not compelling the police to attend to this business. Nor was there any excuse for not altering the law in the direction of making poaching a criminal offence. If salmon hatcheries were provided on the principal rivers he ventured to say that in a short time there would be a great increase in the salmon in the rivers and this would afford remunerative employment to the poor fishermen. At present the fishermen, out of their slender means, had to pay the water bailiffs, whereas the police might perform the duties. The second reason for the decline of the salmon fishing was that at the time when the herring fishing was in full swing, the young salmon appeared at the mouth of the rivers and they were taken and destroyed by the nets. The same might be said of whiting, cod, and mackerel, which if allowed to mature would afford remunerative employment later on. The remedy for this was to prohibit trawlers and large fishing boats fishing in the vicinity of the mouths of the harbours at this season of the year, and to rigidly enforce the three-mile limit. The piers and harbours in his district were in a wretched state and did not afford sufficient accommodation for the fishing boats. They had no harbour sufficiently deep for boats over thirty tons to come in at low water. The sailing trawlers came close to the coast and fished opposite the harbour mouths, with the result that young fish were destroyed in the spawning and feeding grounds. The three-mile limit should be rigorously enforced in order to prevent the destruction of their fisheries and that more employment might be given to their own fishermen, as well as to others who fished outside the prohibited limits. He hoped that this Government would do something in the direction of improving the piers and harbours. He would remind the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary, if he might be allowed to do so, that in dealing with the Irish he was dealing with a people who had a keen sense of justice. It was not justice that the Irish fisheries should be starved while the fisheries of Great Britain were the recipients of lavish expenditure.

*MR. BURDETT-COUTTS (Westminster) said it was so unusual for anyone but an Irish Member to take an interest in such matters that he thought he ought to apologise for intervening in this debate. [IRISH MEMBERS: "No, no!"] It always seemed to him a misfortune that when a subject affecting Ireland in a non-political way came before the House it was invariably confined to hon. Members below the gangway and to one or two Ministers on the Treasury Bench. He did not see much change in that traditional state of things to-night, and he hoped the crowded state of the benches opposite on an occasion when a subject of great importance to Ireland was being discussed would be an indication to the representatives of Ireland of the gratitude which the Liberal Party felt to them for the assistance given at the general election. He did not know much about the Irish inland fisheries, but from what they had heard from the hon. Member for Limerick as to the amount of shooting that went on there, he did not know that it was an enviable occupation to fish in these waters. He had some experience of the sea coast fisheries in that part represented by the hon. Member for South Kerry. The hon. Member had, in his moderate and reasonable speech, brought forward some points which required the immediate attention of the Chief Secretary. In regard to the question of gun boats it appeared to him perfectly absurd that a gun boat should be provided which was unable to catch up foreign trawlers which were violating international law. The suggestion that there should be an expert on the Fishery Board was one which ought to be carried out. He was sorry to hear that county Kerry had not received any benefit from the £100,000 which his own Party had granted for the assistance of fisheries in Ireland. He thought the adoption of a brand would be a very advantageous thing for the fisheries of Ireland. He remembered the experience which they had at Baltimore some years ago when instructors were brought from the United States to teach the fishermen there the best way of curing their fish. The result was that the brand of those fish exported to the United States secured a very high price for them. He would suggest that the brand ought to be a local rather than a national one. He had no *arrière pensée* in making that suggestion. He believed that a local brand for cured fish would encourage a healthy competition in the various parts of Ireland. He had had some experience in regard to the application of auxiliary steam to sailing trawlers, and he could only say that it had generally been found to be a failure in the North Sea, where it had been found that no mean between the steam trawler and the sailing trawler was really useful. Of course, it might be possible to use motors in the way suggested by the hon. Member. The motor was a new invention, and he had no experience of its application to this purpose. The hon. Member for South Cork had complained of the competition of foreign trawlers, particularly the Norwegians. He should like to point out to the hon. Member that the measure of protection suggested to the Chief Secretary was definitely barred by the Resolution passed a few hours earlier to-day, for which he understood the hon. Member had voted. He felt real sympathy with the fishermen on the coasts of Ireland. It had been the custom to contrast the industrial classes in the north of Ireland with the population in other parts which were mostly represented by the Nationalist Members, and to say that the people of the north had greater vigour, self-reliance, independence, and energy. All he could say was that that might be true of people living inland in other parts of Ireland, but in his experience it was certainly not true of those who lived on the long coast line of the South and West of Ireland. The fishermen of those parts were brave, hardy, and industrious men, and in his own experience they had shown in addition certain moral qualities which deserved recognition. They had shown the intention and ability to meet the obligations which they undertook. This had in the result facilitated the development of the fishing industry in those parts. That combination of qualities deserved the sympathy and encouragement of any Government.

MR. CREAN (Cork, S. E.) said that in 1892 the Government of the day instituted an inquiry into the very matter they were now considering. Their own Commissioners presented a Report recommending certain remedies. The Government were in office for a few years and did nothing. Another Commission afterwards inquired into the subject, and its Report contained sufficient evidence and recommendations to guide the present

Government in the action they ought to take. He believed he was not wrong in saying that the largest fishing port on the coasts of Ireland was in his constituency. There were over 500 boats fishing from that port. They came from all parts of Scotland, England, and Ireland They did not complain of that. They welcomed the visitors. What they did complain of was the destruction of fish on the coasts. This was proved conclusively by the evidence given before the Commissioners. The remedy proposed by the Commissioners had not been applied, and the same neglect had gone on for twelve or sixteen years. In answer to a question the other day the Chief Secretary promised another Commission. He would ask the right hon. Gentleman not to trouble them by sending it down. He had been long enough in this House to know the value of such inquiries. Commissions were sent down simply to do nothing. He hoped the Government had come into office to do practical work. He believed they had, and they had the remedy in their hands. In 1893 the Commission recommended a close season for mackerel, so that herring fishers might be prevented from destroying immature mackerel as had been done in the past. The Commission made that recommendation as necessary for the protection of the other sea fisheries in the south of Ireland. If the Government were honestly inclined to do good to the Irish fishing industry they would extend the area of protection and also the period of the close season. If the fish were disturbed on the feeding grounds they were driven away from that particular portion of the coast and naturally the boats followed the fish. The town of Kinsale, which was at one time the most prosperous town in the south of Ireland, was now impoverished; but it was very satisfactory to those in the south of Ireland to find that, when the Governments of England were neglecting them, a noble lady with instincts of doing good had come to their assistance.

Mr. T. M. HEALY (Louth, N.) said that the right hon. the Chief Secretary for Ireland, although he acknowledged that it did not properly belong to him, had arrogated to himself the Department ment of Agriculture and Fisheries. Irish Members had some hope seven or eight years ago when they drew attention to the depressed condition of the fisheries in their country that a Minister for Irish Agriculture and Fisheries should be appointed who would be responsible to this House. A Minister was appointed, but the late Government were unable to secure a seat for him in the House. The present Government, however, could get a safe seat for any Gentleman they might appoint as Minister responsible to the House for Irish Agriculture and Fisheries. He himself had never believed in a Department of Irish Agriculture; he did not think it had added a single blade of grass to the soil of Ireland; but at all events it was something in advance to take from Dublin Castle and the resident magistrates the supervision of the Irish fisheries. He wished to acknowledge that the Department of Irish Agriculture had made some slight efforts to improve agriculture, efforts, however, which the Government had taken no steps to second. The Department of Agriculture had agreed to give a site for a pier at Blackrock in his constituency, if the local authority would give half the money to build it. The county council agreed, but such was the spirit of landlordism even in these days that the owner of the land on which the fishermen lived would not grant a portion of the foreshore for the erection of the pier, and thus the action of the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries had been entirely frustrated. He would suggest that when the Crown was willing to render up its piece of foreshore for the purposes of a pier, compulsory powers should be given to acquire the abutment of the lord of the soil, not only for the erection of a pier or harbour, but for cottages for labourers and fishermen, and residences for the schoolmaster and postmaster. A coast without piers was like a land without roads. Three successive Secretaries had promised him—one in writing—that he would have a grant for a harbour in a particular portion of his constituency where boats could come in and discharge their cargoes in safety, but nothing had yet been done. He thought they were entitled to ask, with regard to certain funds which the Treasury had absorbed from the country, that some greater facilities should be given than they had yet got for the erection of piers on the east coast of Ireland. He was glad to associate himself with what had been said as to the intervention in the debate of the hon. Gentleman the Member for Westminster, who was one with a special right to speak on the subject; and he entirely agreed that so far as the south of Ireland was concerned, never would the name of the distinguished lady with whom the hon. Member was associated be forgotten, or gratitude for her action fade or perish from the minds of Irishmen.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. BRYCE, Aberdeen, S.) said he had to acknowledge the moderation of tone and practicality which had been observed by every speaker. Many valuable suggestions had been made, some of which, at any rate, he hoped to be able to give effect to. He believed that hon. Gentlemen would find that the Irish Governmental authorities were anxious to carry out the suggestions made to them as far as they could. Of course, he himself could not claim to have any direct personal knowledge of a good many of the points raised by hon. Members on the Irish benches. As to the question of the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries raised by the hon. and learned Member for Louth, the present position was a purely provisional one. No decision had been come to as to whether that Department should have a separate representative in the House or not. He hoped to give some thought to that question in the next few months, but it must be understood at the present to be entirely in a state of suspense. He frankly admitted that the whole subject of Irish fisheries was one of very great importance, and that the system was not all that it might be, at anyrate in some places. Considering how much had been done for the fisheries on the Scottish coast, more might be done for the fisheries on the Irish coast, and also for the inland fisheries of Ireland. He agreed that the subject was one which ought to engage the attention of the Irish Government, and, on behalf of the Government, he was perfectly willing to accept the Motion of the hon. Member for South Kerry. The first point raised was the question of patrolling in order to protect Irish fisheries within the three mile limit, not only from foreign but from British trawlers. But he must say that the evidence before him did not go to show that these raids by foreign and British trawlers within territorial waters were so frequent or so serious as might have been gathered from what had been said during the debate. He was told that two cruisers were continually patrolling the southern and western coasts of Ireland. The patrol boats reported that they had captured eighteen trawlers between June, 1904, and September, 1905, and in no case had a trawler, once seen, succeeded in escaping. But it was impossible for the patrol boats to be everywhere, and he was inclined to think that there had been a good deal of exaggeration in the complaints made against them. He was, however, not sure that the fines inflicted had always been sufficiently severe. The Agricultural Department informed him that out of twenty-nine convictions in the last five years, the fines were not sufficient.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Did the Lord-Lieutenant remit the fines?

MR. BRYCE: Not to my knowledge. He regretted that nothing had been done to build a deep water pier at Reenard Point. He knew the place very well, and it was an important centre to that part of the coast of Kerry. Considerable pressure might be put on the Irish railways in this matter, and he was considering the position of those railways both as to rates on fish, and as to the facilities for providing swift trains for the conveyance of fish to market. He knew what an enormous quantity of fish was sent from the port of Aberdeen by quick trains to the middle and south of England, and he would like to see something done in the same direction by the Irish railways. The provision of better piers and harbours would be an important step in the same direction, and the whole subject would receive his closest attention. He confessed he had been rather surprised to hear that such objection had been made by the landowner at Blackrock in regard to the pier. His contention was that no proprietor, whatever his motive, ought to be permitted to stand in the way of a work of such public utility, and should be compelled to give the land on the foreshore for such public works. If compulsory powers did not exist in such cases they ought to. He thought that the rights which the public and the Crown ought to have in the foreshores of the country had been allowed to be very largely absorbed by the proprietors of the adjacent land; and one of the first subjects on which drastic legislation was needed was this of the public rights in the foreshore.

Mr. FLAVIN (Kerry, N.): May I tell the right hon. Gentleman that a landlord in Kerry ordered me to leave the foreshore where I was walking.

Mr. BRYCE: I do not think the landlord had any right to expel the hon. Member.

Mr. FLAVIN: I may tell the right hon. Gentleman I did not leave the shore.

Mr. BRYCE said he would now come to the subject of a herring brand. The herring-branding system had been in operation in Scotland for many years, and although, no doubt, it was theoretically a violation of the doctrine of *laisser faire*, it had worked well in practice and contributed very largely to commanding high prices for Scottish herrings. The Scottish trade was larger, but still there were now considerable herring centres in Ireland and he did not see why the experiment should not be tried there. Reference had also been made to motor boats, which had been such a success on the coasts of Norway and Denmark. They had had an interesting report from Lieutenant Cumming. *Prima facie* there appeared to be a strong case. Experiments were being made in Scotland, and, so far, they had been successful. He did not see why a similar experiment should not be made in Ireland, and he hoped and believed it would be made. Complaint had been made by the hon. Member for South Cork of the delays which had occurred in arriving at conclusions in regard to the establishment of a close season, and proper measures for the protection of immature fish. The reason no action had been taken was that the last inquiry disclosed that there was such a divergence of opinion among the fishermen who represented the different parts of the south coast. They could not agree upon any one by-law. Inquiry, however, had only been deferred till May, and if it were found necessary to have a close season no doubt one would be established. The hon. Member would understand that it was an extremely difficult matter. They were only just beginning to apply scientific methods to the development of fisheries. The latest bacteriological investigations in regard to the loss of fish had shown that very many of the conclusions which obtained a few years ago had very small foundation in fact, and that we had yet to obtain much more information as to the movements of fish and their habits of spawning than we yet possessed before we were fully informed on the subject. It would therefore be dangerous to make any by-laws with the certainty that they would not remain very long in force. That, however, was no reason for not making experiments, but it was a reason for calling upon science to assist us. He passed to the subject of the inland fisheries. The hon. Member for Limerick complained that the boards of conservators were not really representative, and that those interested were not abreast of the necessities of the time. He thought the change in the ownership of land in Ireland was itself a reason for considering whether some change in the boards of conservators was not needed. There was every reason why they should take steps to secure a better representation. He could assure the hon. Member that the whole subject of altering the constitution of the boards of conservators was now before the minds of the Irish Board of Agriculture and the Irish Government generally, and they would consider what steps could be taken to bring about boards which would be more genuinely representative and which would enlist a greater amount of popular interest in the work than was given under the present system. The Board of Agriculture said they were not aware that the rights of the public were being largely infringed upon, but he should be glad to have an inquiry in order to see what could be done to prevent public rights being absorbed by private persons. If it was not possible to interfere with the rights vested in particular persons, it might be possible after inquiry to take steps either to give local bodies powers to enforce public rights, or by legislation in the future to prevent public rights being absorbed. But an inquiry he was afraid would not prevent any right which had been obtained by a private person from being maintained. He knew that in many cases public rights against fishing had suffered, and he was sorry to hear that during the last two years that had been the case along the Shannon. He was endeavouring to have a local inquiry on that subject. An hon. Member had asked for information as to salmon hatcheries, and in regard to them he thought he could give some satisfactory information. The Agricultural Department had in the last few years opened seven hatcheries, and subsidised thirteen, having spent £3,000 upon them since 1889.

Mr. T. M. HEALY asked forthe names of the rivers.

Mr. BRYCE regretted that he had not them with him. As the result of the efforts of the Department there had been an output of from 3,000,000 to 5,000,000 of young fish. The Department wished him to assure the House that they would go further if they could secure the local co-operation which they desired. He attached very high importance to these hatcheries. They had been very successful in some parts of the Continent and in Scotland. He believed that in many rivers and streams of the West and South of Ireland, where the right of fishing with fly or bait was open to the public, it would be of great benefit to the whole country to increase largely the supply of trout. Anglers would be attracted, and hotel business would be promoted. Earlier in the day, in answering a Question, he referred to the subject of the competition of Norwegians in regard to the curing of mackerel. Norwegian instructors were being employed in teaching Irish people, in parts where mackerel were caught, the Norwegian method of curing, and when there had been some experience of the effects of this step he would be glad to give the House further information on the subject. As to the desirability of putting gratings in the mouths of small rivers to prevent fish in spawn getting into shallow water he was afraid there were two difficulties in the way — the considerable expense which would be incurred, and the possibility that such gratings might cause floods by allowing water to accumulate. All the matters to which reference had been made required the expenditure of money, and it was not always possible for the Irish Government to obtain half the money it would like to have for such purposes. He was not at all insensible to the general importance which the subject of fisheries bore in relation to the prosperity of Ireland. There were large parts of the West of Ireland where the people lived on exceedingly bad soil which, where it was fertile, had only been made so by their own labour. These people had been obliged to supplement their earnings by going to England and Scotland to earn wages during part of the year. That being so, it would be a great advantage to them if the fisheries were further developed. He did not wish the Government to be a kind of terrestrial providence to Ireland, but every additional opening that could be found for any class of industry besides agriculture ought to receive the attention of the Government; and he believed that Ireland, having suffered from bad legislation in former times and from neglect when much was being done for other parts of the United Kingdom, had a special claim to the help and assistance of the Government in the development of her national resources to the fullest possible extent.

*SIR THOMAS ESMONDE (Wexford, N.) said that it was impossible to discuss the question in the few minutes remaining before the adjournment of the House, but he was glad that the right hon. Gentleman was alive to the importance of stimulating local industry in connection with fisheries. There were a number of small industries connected with seafisheries that could be developed with very great advantage to Ireland. A number of those industries were very ancient ones, and included that of boat-building. The right hon. Gentleman could do a very good service and improve an Irish industry if he would use his influence with the Congested Districts Board, and the Department of Irish Agriculture, to induce them to develop these industries. The Congested Districts Board and the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries had for a number of years been supplying fishing boats to Irish fishermen, but a large number of boats had been built outside of Ireland which were not better than the Irish boats. This industry had formerly existed in many places, but was now dying out, and he hoped the Chief Secretary would examine into this matter in regard to the whole of Ireland. Of course they all admitted the paramount claims of the congested districts, but he thought that the question of the encouragement of the Irish fisheries should not be merely considered with reference to them. There was a movement warmly taken up four years ago to obtain an extension of the Marine Works Act to districts outside the congested districts. The then Chief Secretary promised that he would inquire into the subject, and he understood that inquiries had been pursued for two or three years, and possibly the right hon. Gentleman could derive some information from them, and see how far it was possible to extend the provisions of the Marine Works Act to districts which were outside the congested districts. The session before last the Secretary to the Treasury said that when a scheme was put forward he would be prepared to consider it. He thought the only real hope of the development of the fresh water fisheries was by increased popular control, and that powers in connection with them should be largely handed over to the Irish councils. He was quite sure a substantial advantage would be obtained by that course.

MR. O'DOHERTY (Donegal, N.) said he represented a fishing district and was proud to say that he was born and had lived and been educated in the neighbourhood. He knew that some legislation was necessary to improve the unhappy condition of the poor inhabitants. He hoped the Chief Secretary would not forget Donegal, and that he would visit the northern part of the county.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.) inquired whether any progress had been made in regard to the suggestion that boats should be provided for the purposes of facilitating the carriage of fish from the Irish fishing coasts to the English markets.

MR. BRYCE said the subject should have his attention.

Question put, and agreed to.

Resolved, "That the condition of Irish Fisheries is unsatisfactory and demands the early attention of the Government."—(*Mr. Boland.*)

Adjourned at two minutes after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Wednesday, 14th March, 1906.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Ascot District Gas (Electric Lighting) Bill (by Order). North East Lincolnshire Water Bill (by Order). Read a second time, and committed.

PETITIONS.

LAND VALUES (ASSESSMENT AND RATING) BILL.

Petition from Reigate, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

LIQUOR TRAFFIC LOCAL VETO (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petition from Aberdeen, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

POST OFFICE TELEPHONES.

Petition from St. Albans against the erection of telephone poles in St. Peter's Street, St. Albans; to lie upon the Table.

PUBLIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS (RELIGIOUS TEACHING).

Petitions against alteration of Law: From East Retford; Gailey; Oldham; and Shaw; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

EAST INDIA (MINERAL CONCESSIONS).

Return [presented 9th March] to be printed. [No. 85.]

SUGAR.

Return ordered, "showing, with regard to London, Paris, and Berlin, the price of sugar and the duty levied thereon at the 1st day of March 1903, 1904, 1905, and 1906, on the lines of the Return, No. 174, of Session 1905."—(*Mr. Toulmin.*)

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Falsification of Records by Assistant Superintendent in Dublin Post Office.

MR. DELANY (Queen's County, Ossory): To ask the Postmaster-General if he has received papers in connection with a charge of falsification of time made by an overseer against an assistant superintendent over three months ago in Dublin; is he aware that a charge of falsification of records was made against this same surperintendent some four or five years ago; and will he inquire into the matter.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) I have received the papers referred to, and have taken notice of the matter. The officer concerned had not, so far as I am aware, been previously reported for falsifying the records of his own attendance; but he was, some years ago, reported for furnishing incorrect records of the conduct of a subordinate officer. For this grave offence he was severely punished.

Repayments of Loans under the Barracks and Military Works Act.

MR. HARMOOD-BANNER (Liverpool, Everton): To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether it is his intention to continue the terms of repayment of the sums advanced under the Barracks and Military Works Acts, in respect of payments made under those Acts for the year 1906–7, or whether it is intended to include such payments in the ordinary Army Estimates; and, if so, where are they to be found in such Estimates.

(*Answered by Mr. Asquith.*) The sums advanced in the past, under the Barracks and Military Works Acts, will continue to be subject to repayment upon the terms prescribed by the Acts, and the necessary provision for repayment will be included as heretofore under Army Vote 10.

Co-operative Societies and Payment of Income Tax.

SIR. EDWARD SASSOON (Hythe): To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether co-operative societies are exempted from the payment of income-tax; and, if so, whether he comtemplates

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

legislation to make these societies assessable to the tax.

(*Answered by Mr. Asquith.*) This question was fully examined by the Departmental Committee on Income Tax, presided over by the late Lord Ritchie. The Committee advised that no case was made out for alterations of income-tax law in regard to co-operative societies (see paragraphs 130–139 of Report [Cd. 2575], 1905).

Strength of the Army.

Dr. MACNARMARA (Camberwell, N): To ask the Secretary of State for War if he can state the total strength of the British Army, regular forces, during each of the years 1896 to 1905 inclusive, stating the numbers of the commissioned and non-commissioned ranks separately.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) The figures are as follows:—

Year.	Strength.			Total, all ranks.
	Officers.	Warrant officers.	Non-commissioned officers and men.	
1st January 1896	7,756	907	213,531	222,194
„ 1897	7,721	917	212,231	220,869
„ 1898	7,689	921	212,393	221,003
„ 1899	8,537	982	222,332	231,851
„ 1900	9,318	1,081	291,145	301,544
„ 1901	13,410	1,225	406,538	421,173
„ 1902	12,882	1,253	383,547	397,682
„ 1903	12,000	1,267	311,386	324,653
1st October 1903	11,759	1,349	279,303	292,411
„ 1904	11,156	1,310	274,774	287,240
„ 1905	10,788	1,310	260,035	272,133

N.B.—The regimental strength does not include the permanent staff of the auxiliary forces, staff, or miscellaneous establishments.

Colonial Audit Branch Appointments.

Mr. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick): To ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether he will explain the method of appointment to positions in the Colonial Audit Branch, under the Comptroller and Auditor-General, and what test these officials have to undergo before appointment; and whether the test is similar to that undergone by those appointed to positions in the other branches of the Home service.

(*Answered by Mr. M'Kenna.*) All appointments to the Colonial Audit Branch are made by the Comptroller and Auditor-General. The higher officers at present in the branch at the headquarters in London were selected from the staff of the Exchequer and Audit Department. Candidates for the appointment must satisfy the Comptroller and Auditor-General that they possess the requisite knowledge and ability for the due discharge of their duties, and that they are within the limits of age, which are fixed at from eighteen to twenty-six. Their physical fitness for service in the Colonies, including the west coast of Africa, is ascertained by one of the medical advisers of the Colonial Office. Some of the clerks were originally in the second division of the Civil Service, but the majority of the candidates recently appointed have been selected from graduates of the Universities. In some cases appointments have been made from officials already in the Colonial Service. The Colonial Audit Branch does not stand on the same footing as ordinary departments of the Home Civil Service, and the Comptroller and Auditor-General is alive to the fact that there are certain anomalies in the constitution of the department, and has under consideration a scheme with the object of removing them.

Navy Estimates—Table of New Guns.

MR. BELLAIRS (Lynn Regis): To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty why the table as to guns to be ordered in the new financial year and ordered in previous years, which has been given in the Navy Estimates for many years past under Vote 9, Item F, has been omitted from the new Navy Estimates; and whether, having regard to the public anxiety which existed last year as to our reserve of heavy guns, he will say if this reserve has been or is being increased.

(*Answered by Mr. Edmund Robertson.*) The details referred to were omitted, because they furnished information as to the armament of new ships and reserves of guns which it is considered undesirable to publish in the public interest. It is not considered desirable, for the same reason, to make any statement in reply to the second part of the Question.

Naval Officers—Specialisation of Duties.

MR. BELLAIRS: To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether the rule is still in force, and will continue in force, that all candidates for naval cadetships will be required to volunteer for any one of the three branches of executive, engineering, and marine officers, so that the Admiralty can allocate the careers of the officers at their sole discretion; and, if so, whether he will notify it in the most public manner, so that the parents of cadets may know that the statement of Admiralty policy, November 30th, which decided against permanent specialisation in the three branches, has been cancelled.

(*Answered by Mr. Edmund Robertson.*) The rule referred to remains in force, and the statement of Admiralty policy has not been cancelled.

Supply of Drafts for Regiments with both Battalions Abroad.

MR. COURTHOPE (Sussex, Rye): To ask the Secretary of State for War if he will say by what system drafts are supplied to the Norfolk Regiment, the Royal Sussex Regiment, the Black Watch, the Essex Regiment, the Royal West Kent Regiment, and the Royal Munster Fusiliers, all of which have both battalions abroad; and what are the military or economic disadvantages of this system as compared with the linked-battalion system.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) The system of supplying drafts to regiments which have both battalions abroad is practically the same as for all other regiments of infantry. One battalion, which is in a temperate climate, receives a draft of recruits from the depot, and in its turn sends a draft of mature and fully-trained soldiers to the other battalion, which is usually in India or at some station in the tropics. If the regimental depot supplied drafts direct to both battalions, its establishment would have to be largely augmented, and considerable extra expenditure would be involved.

Enlistment of "Specials."

MR. NIELD (Middlesex, Ealing): To ask the Secretary of State for War if he will state what is the number of men known as specials who have enlisted during the past twelve months, and what percentage they bear to the total enlistment; and, further, what proportion of such men (specials) are likely to become fully trained and competent soldiers.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) If the hon. Member will kindly refer to the Report on recruiting recently published, he will find the figures for the year ending 30th September, 1905, as 220 and the percentage as 0·6. It is hoped and believed that all these recruits will become fully trained and competent soldiers.

Minimum Wage of Labourers in Government Departments in Dublin.

MR. FIELD: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can arrange a minimum weekly wage of 24s. a week for all labourers in Government employment in Dublin.

(*Answered by Mr. McKenna.*) A weekly wage of 24s. would be, I have reason to believe, very greatly in excess of the prevalent rates for labour paid outside the Public Departments in Dublin, and I can give no such promise as that asked for by the hon. Member.

Dismissal of James McKeough of Dundrum Asylum.

MR. J. P. NANNETTI (Dublin, College Green): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will state the particular act of insubordination James McKeough, the late shoemaker attendant of His Majesty's Asylum, Dundrum, was guilty of, and the date on which it occurred, the particular duties he failed to perform, and on what dates; will he explain why McKeough was not communicated with and his version of the facts taken; and whether, in view of the fact that on August 14th, 1905, McKeough received material evidence in writing as to the means used to have him dismissed his position, he will grant an impartial inquiry at which McKeough will be present to enable him to clear his character.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) I am informed that this man was dismissed in 1903, by order of the then Lord-Lieutenant, for insubordinate conduct and failure to satisfactorily discharge his duties. Before he was discharged, three separate inquiries on oath with reference to his conduct were held by the inspectors of lunatic asylums, at each of which he was afforded a full opportunity of defending himself. As a result of the third inquiry he was, by order of the Lord-Lieutenant, called upon to resign, and, having refused to do so, was dismissed. I do not think it desirable to re-open the consideration of a case which was disposed of three years ago by the Government of the day.

Progress of Marine Works at Falchorrib.

MR. HUGH LAW (Donegal, W.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland when it is intended to proceed with the works at Falchorrib, county Donegal, under the Marine Works Act.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) I find that originally a sum of £1,000 was provisionally mentioned in connection with proposed works at Falchorrib, under the Marine Works Act, but that it was subsequently ascertained that works there to be effective, would cost a much greater sum. The disposal of the balance available under the Marine Works Act is receiving my attention, but I do not expect for some time to be in a position to say whether it will be possible to undertake works at Falchorrib. Meanwhile, I may remind the hon. Member that Donegal has already received a very substantial sum from the Marine Works fund.

Tenders for Drugs for Irish Local Authorities—Recoupment for Local Taxation Accounts.

MR. FIELD: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Government in Ireland through the Local Government Board, intend to exercise the power of imposing restrictions on local boards of guardians in refusing to allow a recoupment from the local taxation account, unless the guardians accept the lowest tender for the supply of drugs or other articles contained in the prescribed lists; and whether, under the present system, Irish firms are precluded from tendering for supplies to English boards of guardians.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) By Article 10 of the Order of the Local Government Board for Ireland, dated December 20th, 1905, it is provided as follows:—Recoupment from the Local Taxation (Ireland) Account will not be allowed in any case where the guardians accept a tender other than the lowest tender received by them for the supply of drugs or other articles contained in the prescribed lists unless the Local Government Board, on application being made to them by the guardians for that purpose, approve of the acceptance of such tender. In reply to the latter part of the Question, I beg to refer to the reply given by my right hon. friend the President of the Local Government Board to a similar Question addressed to him by the hon. Member for West Mayo on Wednesday last.†

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† See (4) *Debates*, clii., 425.

Appointments held by Ballycastle Petty Sessions Clerk.

MR. MACVEAGH (Down, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will cause independent inquiry to be made into the number of avocations followed by the clerk of petty sessions at Ballycastle, county Antrim; whether the previous information was supplied by the clerk himself to the registrar of petty sessions; whether he can state specifically which of the appointments he is alleged to hold are not actually held by him; and whether any of his duties as clerk are discharged by assistants, if not by deputy.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The registrar of petty sessions clerks in Dublin informs me that since the hon. Member's former Question on this subject he has received a statement, signed by all the magistrates of the Ballycastle petty session district to the effect that the clerk has always discharged his duties in person, and to their complete satisfaction. In these circumstances further inquiry into the matter appears to be unnecessary.

Marine Works at Westport Harbour.

DR. AMBROSE (Mayo, W.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he has recently received a Resolution from the Westport Harbour Board, urging the necessity of carrying out in the neighbourhood of Westport the marine works sanctioned under the Marine Works (Ireland) Act; whether he is aware that the delay in carrying out those works has caused disappointment in the locality; and would he, during the Easter recess, visit Westport with a view to hearing the views of the inhabitants on the proposed works.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) I have seen a resolution on this subject which was received in September last from the Westport Harbour Board by my predecessor in office. The matter in question will not escape my attention, but I cannot at present say whether other duties in Ireland will permit me to have the pleasure of an expedition to Westport at Easter.

Main Roads in the County of Antrim.

MR. O'NEILL (Antrim, Mid.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will lay upon the Table the Report of the Inspector of the Local Government Board on the question of the main roads in the county of Antrim; and if he will take steps to have the veto of the Local Government Board removed by legislation, so far as the question of main roads is concerned.

(*Answered by Mr Bryce.*) The Report in question was prepared by the confidential information of the Local Government Board, and it would be contrary to practice to lay it upon the Table of the House. The provision to which the hon. Member refers was enacted by Parliament in order to safeguard the interests of the ratepayers of rural districts affected by the decision of county councils, and I am not prepared to introduce legislation for the repeal of that provision.

Police Process Servers in County Donegal.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland on whose authority were the police told off to accompany a process server when serving ejectment processes on the tenants of the Rutland estate, near Dunkinnerly, county Donegal, on the 3rd and 5th March; why, having regard to the peaceful state of the locality and the absence of crime from this district for many years, was this step taken, which was calculated to convey an erroneous impression of the state of the country; and whether the Government will refuse to put the forces of the Crown in motion to aid eviction proceedings except in cases where there is a reasonable ground for apprehending a breach of the peace.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) This Question probably refers to the Bustard estate, near Dunkineely, county Donegal. I am informed by the police authorities that processes for rent were served on tenants upon that estate on the dates named, but that no application for police protection was made, and that in fact the police did not accompany the process-server.

Agrarian Outrages at Glenties and Dunfanaghy.

MR. HUGH LAW: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he can state the number and nature of all agrarian outrages committed in the rural districts of Glenties and Dunfanaghy during the past ten years.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) I will have this information prepared and forwarded to the hon. Member.

The Disturbance in Natal.

SIR BRAMPTON GURDON (Norfolk, N.): To ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he has any official information to the effect that, on the 10th instant, after his military operations against Gobizembi's tribe in Natal, Colonel Leuchars levied a fine of 1,200 cattle and 3,500 sheep and goats, and deprived the tribe of part of its location as a punishment for resistance to the poll tax; whether this and similar action in other districts of Natal has been authorised by His Majesty's Government; whether the disturbed portions of Natal are in a state of war, warranting Colonel Leuchars' alleged warning to the tribesmen that, although the voice of the supreme chief had spoken through the guns, they had not felt his bite; and, if so, over what part of Natal this state of war prevails; and whether His Majesty's Government is satisfied that, in the arrangements now in progress for enforcing payment of the poll tax, there is no danger of provoking further disturbances.

(*Answered by Mr. Churchill.*) 1. The Secretary of State has no official information to this effect. 2. The action has not been authorised by His Majesty's Government. 3 and 4. Owing to the native disturbances the Natal Ministers advised the Governor to place the whole of the Colony under martial law. 5. His Majesty's Government do not feel that they can with advantage interfere with the responsible Government of Natal in dealing with the situation.

Massacre by Turkish Troops.

MR. GOOCH (Bath): To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs what was the result of the Commission of Inquiry into the massacre of women and children by Turkish troops at the village of Konopnitsa, in the vilayet of Kossova, on August 19th, 1905; whether any officers in command of the troops, or any of the Turkish authorities at Egri Palanka, have been punished; and, if so, to what extent; whether any of the Austrian gendarmerie officers were members of the Commission of Inquiry; and whether they concurred in its decision.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Sir Edward Grey.*) The Commission concluded that the shooting of villagers was due to a misapprehension, by which they were taken for komitadjis. None of the officials concerned have been punished. An Austrian officer was present during the inquiry. He has not, so far as His Majesty's Government are aware, expressed an opinion as to the accuracy of the decision arrived at.

MR. GOOCH: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs what was the result of the Commission of Inquiry into the murder by Turkish troops of nine peasants in the village of Mogila, in the vilayet of Monastir, on September 3rd, 1905; whether any punishment has been inflicted on the officers in command or any Turkish officials; and, if so, to what extent; whether any Italian gendarmerie officers were members of the Commission of Inquiry; and, if so, whether they concurred in its decision.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Sir Edward Grey.*) No information has reached His Majesty's Government as to the conclusions of the Commission in question. His Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople will be instructed to furnish a Report on the subject.

Saturday Half-holiday in Government Offices.

SIR HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central): To ask the Secretary to the Treasury if the Saturday half-holiday, now so usual in all business houses, is extended to the clerical staff of the Civil Service so far as the public service permits; and, in such case, if he will have the Order in Council of 1890 upon the subject amended in that sense, so as to enable all Civil Service clerks to devote their Saturday afternoons to service in the Volunteer Force and upon the rifle range.

(*Answered by Mr. McKenna.*) The Orders in Council of March 21st and August 15th, 1890, provide for a half-holiday on alternate Saturdays, at the discretion of heads of departments, if the state of public business permits; and I am not prepared to amend the Orders in Council, so as to extend this privilege, unless the time can be made up by increasing the working hours on other days of the week.

Superannuation for Temporary Civil Assistants in Ordnance Survey Branch.

MR. GIBBS (Bristol, W.): To ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether he will consider the claims of the temporary civil assistants in the Ordnance Survey to be placed on the same footing as other civil servants as regards the benefits of superannuation, seeing that many of them have served for over thirty years.

(*Answered by Mr. McKenna.*) I have been for some time in communication with my hon. friends the Members for Southampton on this subject, which I am still considering.

Aliens Act—"Disturbed Districts."

MR. BURDETT-COUTTS (Westminster): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department which parts of Europe have been scheduled as disturbed districts in the new instructions given to the officials administering the Aliens Act.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Gladstone.*) None, Sir. The matter is explained by the oral Answers I have given in the House this afternoon.†

Unemployed Bill—Date of Introduction.

MR. THORNE (West Ham, S.): To ask the President of the Local Government Board when it is his intention to introduce the Unemployed Bill.

(*Answered by Mr. John Burns.*) I am not able at present to fix a date for this purpose.

Eton Drainage Scheme—Sanction of Loan.

MR. HERBERT (Buckinghamshire, Wycombe): To ask the President of the Local Government Board whether, having regard to the fact that the Eton Rural District Council has obtained the sanction of his Department for the loan necessary to purchase the land for the treatment of the sewage under its proposed drainage scheme, and that a conditional contract has been entered into for the execution of the main work, he is now prepared to sanction the loan for the main work, which would give employment to the many men now out of work.

(*Answered by Mr. John Burns.*) Some points in connection with the scheme formed the subject of an interview, on Friday last, between officers of the Local Government Board and the engineers employed by the district council. These points have now been settled and the loan will be sanctioned at once.

Cost of Naval Cadets at Osborne.

MR. BELLAIRS: To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty what was the number of cadets borne on the Royal Naval College, Osborne, on which the calculation of the cost to the State of £98 per annum per cadet was founded; whether he will state the actual number of cadets there at the present moment; and whether the calculation takes account of the further prospective expenditure under the Works Vote of the new financial year.

(*Answered by Mr. Edmund Robertson.*) The number on which the calculation was based was 414; the actual number of cadets at Osborne at the present moment is 416. The Answer to the last part of the Question is in the affirmative.

Free Meals for Children in Berlin Schools.

MR. LEWIS HASLAM (Monmouth Boroughs): To ask the President of the Board of Education whether he can state where particulars with respect to the provision of free meals to children in the elementary schools in Berlin may be obtained; and, if he has no information by which he is able to answer this Question, will he take means to obtain it.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) I am afraid that there is no information published upon this subject beyond what I have given to the hon. Member; I will send the hon. Member the address of the association which provides the meals.

Alterations in the Temple of Bodh Gaza at Behar.

MR. BOLAND (Kerry, S.): To ask the Secretary of State for India whether his attention has been called to the projected removal of certain pillars from the abbey to the temple of Bodh Gaza, in Behar, in defiance of the wishes of the Mahmout, his brethren, and adherents throughout India, ostensibly in the interests of the preservation of ancient monuments; and whether he is aware that systematic efforts have been made by the temporal authorities of the Gaza district to harass the Mahmout, by forcing him to obey petty summonses to Government courts, thus attempting to deprive him of the ancient exemption of his order and its abbots; and whether he will issue an order confirming the Mahmout in these ancient exemptions, and in all reasonable rights and privileges, as proprietor or ecclesiastical trustee of all the abbey lands.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cliii., 1241.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Morley.*) I have not had my attention called to the matter referred to in the Question. If the Mahant is dissatisfied with the action of the Government of India, it is open to him to appeal to the Secretary of State in Council in the usual manner; but I apprehend that it rests with the civil courts to define the exact position of the Mahant in respect of the Bodh Gaya temple and its appurtenances.

Sale of Liquor to Coolies on Indian Tea Plantations.

MR. HERBERT ROBERTS (Denbighshire, W.): To ask the Secretary of State for India whether his attention has been called to the efforts now being made by the Government of Eastern Bengal and Assam to induce tea planters to take out licences for the sale of liquor to coolies employed on their estates; whether he can state to what extent this proposal has been adopted; and whether the increase of drinking facilities thereby afforded is in accordance with the declared policy of the Government of India in reference to Excise administration.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Morley.*) I would refer my hon. friend to the Papers laid before Parliament in 1904 regarding the Excise administration in Assam. The Government of India agreed with the Chief Commissioner of Assam that planters should not be pressed to take out licences. I am not aware that the decision has since been departed from. According to the last received Excise Administration Report for Assam very few such licences have been taken out. The expedient was originally suggested by the Planters' Association with the object of enabling the managers of tea gardens to keep control over neighbouring liquor shops, and it is not intended to increase facilities for obtaining liquor.

War Office Clothing Contracts—Alleged Sweating.

MR. THORNE: To ask the Secretary of State for War whether his attention has been called to the fact that a woman has been receiving 2½d. per hour for making soldiers' trousers, from a contractor doing work for the War Office; and, if so, what steps he proposes to take.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) No trace of the receipt of such a complaint can be found in the War Office. I shall be obliged if my hon. friend will furnish me with particulars of the case in question.

Army Charges for South Africa—Colonial Contributions.

MR. MOLTENO (Dumfriesshire): To ask the Secretary of State for War what has been the number and cost in each year since the war ended of the troops maintained in South Africa, and the cost in each year of barracks and other military works; and what has been the amount of the Colonial contributions to these costs.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) The figures are as follows:—

Year.	Average number of troops in South Africa.	Cost on Army Estimates.	Expenditure on Military Works Loan.	Total of two preceding columns.
		£	£	£
1903–4	31,000	7,760,000	1,430,000	9,190,000
1904–5	23,000	2,830,000	1,310,000	4,140,000
1905–6	20,000	2,400,000	300,000	2,700,000

The only contribution towards the above cost made by the Colonial administrations is an annual payment of £4,000 by Natal.

Government Grant to Unemployed Distress Committees.

MR. THORNE: To ask the First Lord of the Treasury if the Government can see their way clear to make a grant of money to distress committees where unemployment is most acute, pending the passing of the Unemployed Bill.

(*Answered by Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman.*) I am afraid I can add nothing to the Answer that I have already made on this subject to the hon. Member for Stoke-on-Trent.

Poor Law Commission—Representative of Irish Medical Profession.

MR. MACVEAGH: To ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether it is intended to give effect to the recommendation of the Leinster Branch of the Medical Association that the Poor Law Commission should include a representative of the medical profession in Ireland.

(*Answered by Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman.*) The Answer is in the negative.

Machinery and Cost of Contested Elections to Foreign Legislative Assemblies.

MR. CHANNING (Northamptonshire, E.): To ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether His Majesty's Government will obtain and issue as Command Papers, with the least possible delay, Reports from His Majesty's representatives at the several European courts as to the machinery and cost of contested elections to legislative assemblies at the present time in the several countries, and as to the proportion of the expenditure borne out of local or Imperial funds at the present time, similar to Reports on these subjects obtained in 1881 [Cd. 2987], 1882 [Cd. 3159], and 1893–4 [Cd. 6953], and Reports from the several Colonial Governments in the British Empire, giving the most recent facts as to the machinery and cost of elections, and how these costs are borne.

(*Answered by Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman.*) I quite appreciate the importance of obtaining the information which my hon. friend desires, and I have ascertained that the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs is willing to issue an instruction to His Majesty's diplomatic representatives calling for Reports upon the subject, and also that the Secretary of State for the Colonies will ask the governors to supply him with the particulars required. When these Returns are obtained, we shall have an accurate basis for estimating the relative cost of Parliamentary elections in this and other countries, together with a complete statement as to how these expenses are borne.

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

Reserve of Navy Guns.

MR. BELLAIRS (Lynn Regis): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty why the table as to guns to be ordered in the new financial year and ordered in previous years, which has been given in the Navy Estimates for many years past under Vote 9, Item F, has been omitted from the new Navy Estimates; and whether, having regard to the public anxiety which existed last year as to our reserve of heavy guns, he will say if this reserve has been or is being increased.

THE SECRETARY TO THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. EDMUND ROBERTSON, Dundee): The details referred to were omitted because they furnished information as to the armament of new ships and reserves of guns, which it is considered undesirable to publish in the public interest. It is not considered desirable, for the same reason, to make any statement in reply to the second part of the Question.

Naval Cadets.

MR. BELLAIRS: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether the rule is still in force, and will continue in force, that all candidates for naval cadetships will be required to volunteer for any one of the three branches of executive engineering, and marine officers, so that the Admiralty can allocate the careers of the officers at their sole discretion; and, if so, whether he will notify it in the most public manner, so that the parents of cadets may know that the statement of Admiralty policy, 30th November, which decided against permanent specialisation in the three branches, has been cancelled.

Mr. EDMUND ROBERTSON: The rule referred to remains in force, and the statement of Admiralty policy has not been cancelled.

Mr. COURTHOPE (Sussex, Rye): Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that an impression to the contrary exists in the public mind since he made his speech on the Estimates?

Mr. EDMUND ROBERTSON: I am not.

Irish Press and Irish Recruiting.

Mr. LONSDALE (Armagh, Mid.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether his attention has been called to a statement in the last Report of the Director of Recruiting and Organisation [Cd. 2693], that, in Ireland, articles in the Press have been published, and placards have been posted up to deter intending recruits from enlisting; and whether the notice of the civil power has been drawn to this drawback to recruiting in Ireland.

The SECRETARY of STATE for WAR (Mr. Haldane, Haddington): I am aware of the statement alluded to. I believe that the notice of the civil power has been drawn to the matters mentioned. Personally, I attach very little importance to the matter.

Mr. FLAVIN (Kerry, N.): Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that the hon. Member who put this Question was asked to volunteer for service in South Africa, and refused to go there?

[No Answer was returned.]

Volunteer Encampment.

Mr. SCOTT (Ashton-under-Lyne): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War if he will consider the advisability of allowing all Volunteers to go to camp for sixteen days, under the same conditions that Field Army Brigades (Volunteer) are at present privileged.

Mr. HALDANE: This subject will be considered in all its bearings, but my hon. friend will well understand that I am not at present able to make any definite pronouncement on the matter.

Ireland's Garrison.

*Mr. VINCENT KENNEDY (Cavan, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War if he will state what is the number of troops required in Ireland; what is the present strength, with the approximate cost; and where are these troops stationed.

Mr. HALDANE: The figures for all ranks are as follows:—

	Establishment.	Strength.	Cost. £
Regulars	29,005	25,827	2,648,000
Militia	29,279	19,468	398,000
Yeomanry	940	911	19,000

I cannot undertake to read out to the House the list of places at which these troops are stationed. If the hon. Member will refer to the Army List, he will, I think, find the information he requires.

*Mr. VINCENT KENNEDY: Will the right hon. Gentleman say when and where these troops were actively engaged in Ireland?

Mr. HALDANE: I must refer the hon. Member for these particulars to the Army List.

Free Holiday Passages for Soldiers from India.

Sir CARNE RASCH (Essex, Chelmsford): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether he would consider the propriety of allowing soldiers of six years service, who are willing to re-engage, to have a free passage out and back on furlough home.

The UNDER-SECRETARY of STATE for INDIA (Mr. John Ellis, Nottinghamshire, Rushcliffe): A six months furlough with free passages both ways is granted to all non-commissioned officers who have completed six years service abroad and have re-engaged, so that the suggested concession may be said to be already in force for a portion of the men referred to. An offer of furlough with free passages after four years total service was recently made to men enlisted for three years who would extend to complete eight years. The Secretary of State for India has recently considered in consultation with the Army Council concessions of furlough, and is not prepared to go beyond the offers already made.

Colonial Conference.

Mr. LONSDALE: I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether any, and, if so, what, communications have been sent to the Governments of the self-governing Colonies with regard to the next Colonial Conference; and whether any date has been fixed for the holding of that Conference.

*The UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. Churchill, Manchester, N.W.): I have to refer the hon. Member to the Answer which I gave on the 12th instant to the Question of the hon. Member for the Elland Division.† The despatch which has been addressed to the Governors of the various Colonies on the subject of the next Colonial Conference will be laid on the Table as soon as the correspondence is completed.

Flogging of Chinese Coolies—Lord Milner's Action.

Sir J. JARDINE (Roxburghshire): To ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether, in the year 1905, any Chinese coolies of the gold mines in the Transvaal were subjected to any flogging or corporal punishment otherwise than in accordance with Ordinances or other enactments; and, if so, how many persons were so treated, and what were the nature and extent of such flogging or corporal punishment; whether it was preceded by any judicial inquiry or inquiry by any public officer, and whether any record was made at the time of the reasons for, and amount of, the sentence; and whether Lord Milner gave a written or oral sanction to any such system, and whether he consulted the Lieutenant Governor or any law officer before so doing.

*Mr. CHURCHILL: The hon. Member will find information to the effect that such corporal punishment took place, in Mr. Lyttelton's telegram of October 24th printed at page 44 of Cd. 2786. The Secretary of State is not aware how many persons were subjected to this illegal treatment. The permission given is stated to have been for slight corporal punishment as practised in public schools in England, but it is admitted that the permission was abused. It was not preceded by any judical inquiry or inquiry by any public officer, and so far as the Secretary of State is aware no records were kept. The sanction which Lord Milner is understood to have given by intimating that he would take no objection as stated in Mr. Lyttelton's telegram appears to have been oral. There is no information in the possession of the Secretary of State to show that Lord Milner consulted the Lieutenant Governor or any law officer.

*Mr. BELLOC (Salford, S.) asked the hon. Gentleman whether, in his opinion, there was any guarantee whatever that Lord Milner did not do any illegal thing if they had no record.

*Mr. CHURCHILL: I think my hon. friend will see that there is no doubt whatever that in authorising illegal punishment of this character at the same time that his official superiors were denying that such punishment was being permitted Lord Milner committed a grave dereliction of public duty, and at the same time an undoubted infringement of the law.

Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.): Is Lord Milner still a member of the Privy Council?

Sir J. JARDINE: Will the hon. Gentleman make inquiries of Lord Milner or of others, with a view to getting more information than is contained in the Blue-book, as to how this authority was given, whether orally, or by special intimation, or——

*Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order! Notice must be given of that Question.

Mr. MACKARNESS (Berkshire, Newbury): Has any information been sought from Mr. Evans on this matter?

*Mr. CHURCHILL: No, I do not think that any information on this particular question has been sought from Mr. Evans. The fact that Lord Milner has himself publicly assumed responsibility for this transaction has placed Mr. Evans in a somewhat indirect position in regard to this matter.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cliii., 913–14.

*Mr. J. WARD (Stoke-on-Trent) asked whether it was the intention to apply to some one in authority on the Rand to ascertain how far this unauthorised torture was inflicted on the coolies.

*Mr. CHURCHILL: I will ask the Secretary of State whether he will make inquiries on that subject.

Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL: Will the Attorney-General be asked whether the Public Prosecutor should be put in motion?

[No Answer was returned.]

Labour Regulations.

Mr. HARMOOD-BANNER (Liverpool, Everton): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies with reference to the new regulations to be enforced about Kaffir compounds, Command Paper 2819, page 141, whether he will say when the new regulations, under the Coloured Labourers Health Regulation Ordnance, will be published.

*Mr. CHURCHILL: The Secretary of State has not yet received information as to the publication of the new regulations under the Ordnance referred to. Inquiry will be made.

Workmen's Compensation Act—Child Workers.

Mr. CHIOZZA MONEY (Paddington, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he will consider the advisability of including in the Workmen's Compensation Bill, promised in His Majesty's Speech, a clause to provide adequate compensation for child workers who, at the time of their injury, can only be earning a few shillings a week.

*The SECRETARY of STATE for the HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. Gladstone, Leeds, W.): The point has not been overlooked in preparing the Bill which I hope will shortly be introduced.

Administration of the Aliens Act.

Mr. S. COLLINS (Lambeth, Kennington): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he will take steps for the immediate provision of a receiving house for the accommodation of persons detained at ports under the Aliens Act.

*Mr. GLADSTONE: I have no power under the Act to provide such a receiving house. The responsibility of dealing with alien immigrants from whom leave to land is withheld is left by the Act with the shipping companies or shipmasters who bring them. In some ports receiv-houses have been established by the companies concerned, and I have continually urged and will urge the London companies to join in establishing a receiving house for London.

Sir W. EVANS-GORDON (Tower Hamlets, Stepney): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department upon what grounds and evidence the new regulations providing for the admission of all persons coming to this country from disturbed parts of Europe have been framed.

*Mr. GLADSTONE: No such regulations have been made. The instructions issued to Immigration Officers and the advice to Immigration Boards are only that they should give the benefit of the doubt, where any doubt exists, to persons coming from disturbed parts of Europe who claim the privileges of a refugee.

Sir W. EVANS-GORDON: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he proposes to lay upon the Table a Copy of the revised Rules under the provisions of the Aliens Act; and, if so, when the House will be placed in possession of them.

*Mr. GLADSTONE: There has been no revision of the rules. I have revoked one existing Order, viz., that fixing the number twelve as the number which constitutes a ship an immigrant ship, and I have in draft a single new rule dealing with the admission of the Press to Board meetings. I have no objection to laying both these on the Table, together with copies of all the existing rules and Orders. I will also lay a copy of the letter I have just addressed to Immigration Boards, and a copy of the instructions I have just issued to Immigration Officers.

MR. BYLES (Salford, N.): Is it the intention of the Government to introduce legislation amending the Aliens Act?

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! Notice must be given of that Question.

SIR. GILBERT PARKER (Gravesend): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if his decision to give full benefit of the doubt to any Russian emigrant who alleges that he fears persecution at home will be extended to all Russian subjects who reach this country from non-Russian ports.

*MR. GLADSTONE: Cases must be decided on their individual merits by Immigration Officers and Boards.

SIR GILBERT PARKER: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if Macedonia, Hungary, the Turkish Empire, Roumania, Bulgaria, and Spain are included among the countries specified by the Home Secretary as being disturbed, and from which free access of aliens will be permitted to this country.

*MR. GLADSTONE: I specified no country. My remarks were intended to apply to any country where it appears for the time being that serious political disturbances are taking place.

MR. CLAUDE HAY (Shoreditch, Hoxton): How does the right hon. Gentleman propose to obtain the information as to the disturbed countries?

*MR. GLADSTONE: It is a matter of common-sense and common knowledge.

MR. CLAUDE HAY: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether, in view of his intention to extend the hospitality of these shores to all foreign persons who allege they are suffering from religious or political persecution, he will take the necessary measures to prevent such persons from becoming a burden upon the poor districts of the great cities of England, Scotland, and Ireland, and to prevent the hospitality extended to foreigners who allege they are distressed becoming a charge upon the national funds.

*MR. GLADSTONE: I can only say that I have expressed no such intention.

MR. CLAUDE HAY: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether the uncorroborated statement of an alien immigrant is to be accepted, under the new regulations of the Aliens Act he has announced, that he or she comes from a disturbed country or a disturbed district of a foreign country.

*MR. GLADSTONE: I have never suggested that this should be done, nor have I ever made any regulation to this effect.

Aliens Act—Maintenance of Aliens.

MR. CLAUDE HAY: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what steps he proposes to take under the new regulations of the Aliens Act to ensure that aliens who allege they have taken ship to this country because they are the subjects of religious or political persecution shall not become a charge upon the public funds.

*MR. GLADSTONE: I have already answered this Question.

Import of Bounty-fed Malt.

MR. FELL (Great Yarmouth): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he is aware that there is a bounty or rebate of five francs per quarter paid by the French Government on all malt made in France and shipped to England, and that such bounty-fed malt is now coming to London, and being offered to the English brewers at a price from three to four shillings below the price of English malt; and what steps he can take to save English maltsters and the barley growers in this country from this competition.

MR. FELL had given notice of the following Question also: To ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he is aware that there is a duty of eight francs per quarter on malt imported into France; and whether, in view of the effect of this duty upon the export of English malt into that country, he proposes to take any action in the matter.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE, Carnarvon Burghs): I will answer the two Questions of the hon. Member together. The French import duty on malt is four francs per 100 kilogrammes. I am not aware of any bounty on exported malts. Possibly the hon. Member is referring to the system of "temporary admission," under which the import duty on barley is remitted on condition of exporting an equivalent amount of malt. I have no reason to suppose that this system gives rises to a bounty. Up to the end of last month only 60 cwts. of malt had been imported into the United Kingdom from France, since the beginning of 1905.

MR. FELL: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman if he could make further inquiry as to what is going on at the present time? I am informed there are 500 quarters of malt from France in the Thames at the present moment.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: If the hon. Member will give me any particulars of that sort I shall certainly inquire.

Employment and Manufactured Imports.

MR. BOWLES (Lambeth, Norwood): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he is aware that, during the period from 1860 to 1903, the greatest improvement in employment in any one year in the United Kingdom was accompanied by the greatest yearly increase in manufactured imports, that the year 1872 of best known employment during that period was a year of great increase in manufactured imports, and the year 1879 of worst known employment was a year of great decrease in manufactured imports; and whether he would grant a Return, showing the increase or decrease of employment, and the corresponding increase or decrease of manufactured imports, for each year during the period in question.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: The facts are as stated in the hon. Member's Question. There would be no objection to granting such a Return if moved for.

Merchant Shipping Bill.

MR. H. H. MARKS (Kent, Thanet): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade when it is his intention to introduce the Bill to amend the Merchant Shipping Acts.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: I hope to introduce the Bill on Tuesday next.

Government Officials as Political Agents.

MR. VIVIAN (Birkenhead): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether his attention has been called to the case of a paid permanent civil servant, viz., a registrar of births, marriages, and deaths, who has acted for three weeks as a paid agent for a political candidate; and if this civil servant, having been warned of the consequences of his conduct, still persists in doing paid work for this candidate, will he say if he proposes to continue him in his appointment.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. JOHN BURNS, Battersea): My hon. friend has asked me to reply to this Question. My attention has not been called to the case referred to in it, but I may point out that registrars of births and deaths and registrars of marriages are not paid permanent civil servants, or indeed civil servants at all. They are appointed by the boards of guardians or superintendent registrars, as the case may be, and are paid by fees. They hold office during the pleasure of the Registrar-General. Speaking generally, a registrar is not debarred from performing political or other work in the hours which he is not required to devote to his public duties, provided that those duties are in no way interfered with. If, however, my hon. friend will inform me of the name of the officer to whom he refers, and of his district, I will ask the Registrar-General to inquire into the circumstances of the case.

Licensing and Welsh Disestablishment.

MR. D. A. THOMAS (Merthyr Tydvil): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he intends to introduce next Session a measure relating to licensing reform; and whether he can now give any indication as to the time when he proposes to bring in a Bill to terminate the establishment of the Church of England in Wales and Monmouthshire.

* MR. GLADSTONE: The Answer to the first part of the hon. Member's Question is in the affirmative. With regard to the second, I am not in a position to make any statement.

Langside (Glasgow) Postal Arrangements.

MR. LAIDLAW (Renfrewshire, E.): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General if he is aware that the postal arrangements for the district of Langside, Glasgow, are causing inconvenience to the inhabitants of the said district; and whether he will give instructions to the postmaster in Glasgow to deliver and collect letters from that district in uniformity with the other districts comprising the municipality of Glasgow.

THE POSTMASTER-GENERAL (Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON, Tower Hamlets, Poplar): Inquiry shall be made in regard to the postal arrangements at Langside, Glasgow, and the result shall be communicated to the hon. Member.

Scottish Sub-Postmasters and their Holidays.

MR. LAIDLAW: I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether he is aware that no provision is made whereby sub-postmasters in the rural districts of Scotland are entitled to yearly holidays; that some of them have not had holidays for many years, and that when holidays are granted they are expected to provide and pay for efficient service during their absence; and if he will consider the claims of sub-postmasters to yearly holidays without their being expected to provide or pay for substitutes.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: Sub-postmasters with no private business, who are paid an inclusive fixed salary, and are required to give a regular daily attendance of not less than eight hours are granted annual leave of twelve working days; but sub-postmasters who are paid by commission according to the amount of post office business transacted, and who are generally shopkeepers, may be allowed leave of absence only when they themselves can make satisfactory provision for their duties while they are away. These latter are in the position rather of contractors than of servants; and as long as they provide for the work for which they are paid, their personal attendance is not generally obligatory. This rule is applicable to the whole of the United Kingdom.

Rothesay Fishery Conference.

MR. LAMONT (Buteshire): I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland whether, in view of the unanimous resolution of the recent Fishery Conference at Rothesay, the Fishery Board for Scotland will now enforce the Act 52 and 53 Vic., cap. 23, section 5, prohibiting daylight fishing in the Firth of Clyde.

THE SECRETARY FOR SCOTLAND (Mr. SINCLAIR, Forfarshire): Daylight fishing for herrings between Ardnamurchan Point and the Mull of Galloway is prohibited between June 1st and October 1st, and the Fishery Board will continue their endeavours as hitherto, to secure the enforcement of the statute.

Royal Irish Constabulary—Pension Regulations.

MR. O'MARA (Kilkenny, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been directed to the Bill introduced by the Secretary of State for the Home Department regulating police superannuation in England, containing a clause specifying, among the cases in which a pension or an allowance becomes forfeited, the case of a grantee who without the consent of the police authority accepts any testimonial of pecuniary value on his retirement; and whether he will introduce a similar regulation for the Royal Irish Constabulary.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. BRYCE, Aberdeen, S.): The Question raised by the hon. Member will be considered in the event of the introduction of a Bill for the Amendment of the Royal Irish Constabulary Acts.

MR. O'MARA: Will the Bill be brought in this session?

MR. BRYCE: I have not considered that yet.

Irish Judicial Rents.

MR. GINNELL (Westmeath, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the increasing difficulty of paying judicial rents; and whether, in view of the fact that those amounts are reached by giving the landlord credit for improvements made by the tenant and by inadequate consideration of the prices of farm produce and of labour, His Majesty's Government will make any provision, like Section 29 of the Land Law (Ireland) Act, 1887, for revising within the statutory term rents fixed on inadequate or improperly applied data.

MR. BRYCE: The Irish Government have no information that there is increasing difficulty in paying judicial rents. I have already dealt with the remaining points of this Question, in my replies to previous Questions put by the hon. Member. I am not prepared to make any statement as to amending legislation until more experience has been accumulated of the working of the Land Acts.

MR. GINNELL: When the schedule states that the landlord has made no improvement while the tenant gets no credit for the drains he has laid down, is not that transferring the tenant's property to the landlord?

*MR. SPEAKER: Notice should be given of that Question.

Tenants' Improvements.

MR. GINNELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, having regard to the definition of improvement in The Landlord and Tenant (Ireland) Act, 1870, the rights conferred upon tenants in respect of improvements by that Act, amended by the Land Law (Ireland) Act, 1896, the inadequacy of the form of schedule now used by the Irish Land Commission for recording improvements, and the practice of fixing rents upon the tenant's improvements, contrary to law, he will order the immediate preparation and use of an amended schedule, setting out expressly under the general heading Improvements, the following sub-headings, namely: buildings; reclamation; fences made or removed; drainage; farm roads; planting for defence or shelter; manures unexhausted; deep tillage; removal of rocks; removal of furze and heather from land naturally subject to them; levelling hills, filling hollows; wall or embankment against water; and any other work which adds to the letting value of the holding.

MR. BRYCE: I am informed by the Land Commission that the schedule referred to is in the form which has been duly prescribed in pursuance of Section I of the Land Law Act of 1896. The power of prescribing such form is vested by law in the Land Commission, and it is not competent to me to direct the changes which the hon. Member desires. I may, however, add that I am informed that the statement that the practice prevails of fixing rents upon the tenants' improvements is not in accordance with the facts.

Agrarian Crime in Galway.

MR. LONSDALE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will explain why several men, who were sentenced at the Galway assizes for agrarian offences, were released on 19th February, two months before their terms had expired; whether he is aware that the same night an attack was made on the house of a grazier in the neighbourhood of Ballindereen; and will he say whether the police have made any arrests in connection with the matter.

MR. BRYCE: The men referred to in the first inquiry were released by order of the Lord-Lieutenant on 19th February. They had completed seven out of the nine months' imprisonment to which they were sentenced. I cannot make any statement as to the reasons which influenced the Lord-Lieutenant in the exercise of the prerogative of mercy vested in him. I have already answered the remaining inquiries in my reply to the hon. Member's Question of the 27th February.†

MR. DUFFY (Galway, S.): Has the right hon. Gentleman received a copy of a Resolution passed at a meeting in this parish, presided over by the priest?

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! Notice must be given.

MR. DUFFY: I only want to know if the right hon. Gentleman has received the Resolution from this parish denouncing this outrage.

*MR. SPEAKER: Notice must be given, as the right hon. Gentleman must refer to the office to find out.

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† See (4) *Debates*, clii., 1032.

Irish Exports and Imports.

Mr. O'MARA: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, as representing the Department of Agriculture, whether the provisional and approximate figures of the exports and imports of Ireland for the year 1902–3, promised by the right hon. Member for Dover in 1904, are yet ready for publication.

Mr. BRYCE: Statistics for the year ending 31st December, 1904, have been compiled, and will be published at an early date. It is not now intended to publish statistics for any year prior to 1904, as the returns which it was found possible to obtain were not of sufficient completeness to justify publication.

Irish Industrial Schools.

Mr. SLOAN (Belfast, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he can state what is the exact income from all sources of the industrial schools in Ireland; and, if not, will he grant a Return giving full particulars.

Mr. BRYCE: I beg to refer the hon. Member to the table on page 13 of the Report for 1904 of the Inspector of Reformatory and Industrial Schools in Ireland (Cd. 2707 of 1905), which gives the information asked for.

Woman Inspector for Irish Industrial Schools.

Mr. SLOAN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will consider the advisability of appointing a woman inspector for reformatory and industrial schools similar to that exising in England and Scotland.

Mr. BRYCE: The suggestion made by the hon. Member will be considered. I understand that there is only one such inspector in Great Britain, and the number of schools to be inspected there is of course very much larger.

Mrs. Hildyard's Estate, County Limerick.

Mr. LUNDON (Limerick E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can say if negotiations for sale to the tenants are in progress between Mrs. Hildyard and the Estates Commissioners, in regard to her estate in Dunkip Croom, County Limerick; whether the unoccupied portion of the estate will be parcelled out to labourers; and will the part subject to inundations be given over to poor farmers in the district.

Mr. BRYCE: I am informed by the Estates Commissioners that no proceedings for the sale of this estate have been instituted before them. They have, however, received an application on behalf of the labourers on the estate which will be duly considered in the event of the estate coming before them to be dealt with.

St. Patrick's Day Celebrations.

Mr. O'MARA: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether, in view of the Licensed Premises (St. Patrick's Day) (Ireland) Bill now before Parliament, he will take steps to ascertain the percentage of public houses closed wholly or partially on the 17th March next in the following police districts: Dublin, Belfast, Cork, Londonderry, Limerick, Waterford, Galway, and Kilkenny.

Mr. BRYCE: I presume that the police will be in a position to report on this matter, as they did last year, and I shall have no objection to make known the result.

Value of Irish Crops.

Mr. O'MARA: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will include in Cd. 2854 the estimated annual value of the different items of agricultural produce dealt with therein; and whether he can give an estimate what the total value of the net produce of the crops was for the year 1905 in Ireland.

Mr. BRYCE: The estimated annual value of the principal Irish crops in 1905 will be shown, in accordance with the existing practice, in the detailed annual report on agricultural statistics. A provisional estimate, however, will be inserted next year in the return for 1906 corresponding to Cd. 2854. The value of the principal Irish crops in 1905 may, in the opinion of the Department of Agriculture, be estimated at 30½ millions sterling.

Irish Butter Production.

MR. O'MARA: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can give an estimate of the total value of butter produced in Ireland in the year 1905; and what percentages of this production were consumed therein and exported respectively.

MR. BRYCE: It is estimated by the Department of Agriculture that the value of the butter produced in Ireland in 1905 was £5,250,000 sterling. No estimate of the value of the butter exported in 1905 has been formed, but it is estimated that the value of the butter exports from Ireland in 1904 was £3,250,000 sterling.

Appointments of Teachers to Irish Schools.

SIR EDWARD CARSON (Dublin University): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether it is the practice in Ireland for the managers of public elementary or national schools invariably to appoint teachers of their own religious denomination.

MR. BRYCE: I am informed by the Commissioners of National Education, that as a rule the managers of national schools appoint teachers of the same religious persuasion as themselves, but not invariably so.

Religious Instruction in Irish Elementary Schools.

SIR EDWARD CARSON: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether religious instruction is given to the pupils in all public elementary schools in Ireland, and by whom such instruction is given.

MR. BRYCE: The Commissioners of National Education inform me that under their rules opportunities must be afforded to the pupils in all schools for receiving such religious instruction as their parents or guardians may approve. In vested schools such pastors or other persons as shall be approved by the parents or guardians of the children must have access to them in the school-room for the purpose of giving them religious instruction there. In non-vested schools the patrons or local managers determine whether any, and if any, what religious instruction shall be given in the school-room, but if they do not permit it to be so given, the children whose parents or guardians so desire must be allowed to absent themselves from the school at reasonable times for the purpose of receiving religious instruction elsewhere. Religious instruction is given in nearly all national schools, and in the majority of cases by the teachers of the schools. In a great many cases, religious instruction is also given by the pastors of the different denominations.

Irish Land Purchase—Trustees Investments.

MR. LONSDALE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the Public Trustee under the Land Act of 1903, acting on the advice of counsel, has refused permission to trustees to invest in certain stocks which the Court of Appeal have decided come within the scope of the Land Act; and whether he is prepared to introduce a Bill to make clear and enlarge the powers of trustees in regard to investments.

MR. BRYCE: I am informed by the Public Trustee that he has refused permission to trustees to invest in the stocks of foreign railway companies, and has also refused permission, in one particular case, to invest in the ordinary stock of a certain home railway company. Under Section 51 (1) (f) of the Act of 1903, the sufficiency of investments in railway stocks to realise the sum invested upon the termination of the trust shall be secured to the satisfaction of the Public Trustee. I am informed that, in a case decided last year, the Master of the Rolls while holding that the ordinary stocks of railway companies were not excluded from the consideration of the Public Trustee, stated that if he were Public Trustee it would be very difficult to persuade him that any such ordinary stock was secured in the sense indicated in the section. In the same case, the Court of Appeal in Ireland subsequently expressed concurrence in the opinion of the Master of the Rolls. In these circumstances, it does not appear to be necessary to introduce amending legislation.

Royal University of Ireland.

MR. LONSDALE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he has had communicated to him the resolution passed by a majority at the last meeting of the Senate of the Royal University, recommending that it should be made a teaching university, with colleges adequately constituted and brought into organic connection with it; whether this resolution is in accord with the policy of the Government; and when he will be able to make a full statement of the scheme of the Government for dealing with university education in Ireland.

MR. BRYCE: The Resolution in question has been communicated to me. I am not prepared to make any statement on the subject at present.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that Ireland has no teaching university of any kind?

[No Answer was returned.]

MR. LONSDALE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, whether he is able to state the reasons given by the right hon. the Earl of Meath for his resignation of the office of Chancellor of the Royal University; and whether, in selecting his successor. the Government will make representations to the Senate with regard to the desirability of taking adequate steps to prevent a repetition of the disorderly and disloyal demonstration which occurred at the last conferment of degrees.

MR. BRYCE: Lord Meath entertained doubts as to the competence of the Senate under the Charter of the Royal University to maintain order at the conferring of degrees; and, in consequence, he proposed that the Charter should be amended, or that he should be relieved of the responsibility of maintaining order. The Government informed Lord Meath that they were advised that the Senate had the power to maintain order and to take all steps necessary to that end; and that an amendment of the Charter for that object was, therefore, unnecessary. Lord Meath, however, continuing doubtful as to the Senate's powers, resigned the Chancellorship, to the regret of the Government.

MR. LONSDALE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, whether he can state who has been selected for the office of Chancellor of the Royal University.

MR. BRYCE: No appointment has yet been made.

Prohibition of Cattle Imports into the United Kingdom.

MR. LONSDALE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he has received a Resolution passed by the Cattle Committee of the Armagh Agricultural Association, protesting against any alteration of the existing Law, which debars Canadian and all foreign store cattle being admitted into the United Kingdom; and whether, in view of the consequences that the removal of the present restrictions would have for Irish farmers, he will take care that the interests of Ireland are fully considered by the Government.

MR. BRYCE: I have received the Resolution referred to. The hon. Member may rely that the interests of Ireland, as indeed of all parts of the United Kingdom, will be fully considered by His Majesty's Government.

Lambert's Minors Estate.

MR. DUFFY (Galway, S): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the estate of Lambert's Minors, at present under the control of the Lord Chancellor, is about being sold to the tenants; and, if so, what is the intention of the Estates Commissioners with regard to the untenanted grass lands surrounding the town of Athenry; and whether, in view of the representations made by all the local bodies, the Commissioners will facilitate the sale of the town holdings on the estate to the occupying tenants.

MR. BRYCE: The Lord Chancellor informs me that the reply to the first part of the Question is in the affirmative, and that he will put no obstacle in the way of the sale of the town holdings to the tenants. The estate has not come before the Estates Commissioners, but if they should acquire untenanted land in the locality they will consider the best method of utilising it, and also any application made to them with reference to town holdings.

Irish Farmers and Canadian Cattle.

CAPTAIN CRAIG (Down E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether, in the event of the Government deciding to remove the restrictions which at present exist against the importation of Canadian cattle into the United Kingdom for breeding or store purposes, he proposes to introduce a measure to reduce the annual instalments payable by farmers in Ireland who have bought out their holdings under recent Land Acts to an extent commensurate with the loss which they would suffer through the removal of the protection which existed when they bought their farms.

* MR. BRYCE: I beg to refer to the reply which I gave on Monday last to a Question on this subject put by the hon. Member for South Cork.†

Ellis Estate, County Limerick.

MR. O'SHAUGHNESSY (Limerick, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the agricultural portion of the Ellis estate, in the parish of Abbeyveale, in the county of Limerick, is about to be sold under the Land Act, 1903, and that the tenants of houses in the town of Abbeyveale on the estate, to nearly all of which there is land attached, are willing to buy their holdings under the Act; and whether, seeing that almost all these houses were built by the tenants, under the circumstances the Estates Commissioners will sanction the advance to the agricultural tenants, without inquiring into the matter, and having the town tenants included in the sale of the estate.

* MR. BRYCE: The Estates Commissioners inform me that the originating application in respect of the sale of this estate sets out thirty-three acres of the town of Abbeyveale as property in the occupation of the vendor which he does not propose to sell, as being outside the provisions of the Land Purchase Acts. The sale of the estate will be dealt with in order of priority, and the Commissioners will consider the position of the town tenants.

MR. O'SHAUGHNESSY: Can the estate be sold if these thirty-three acres are excluded?

* MR. BRYCE: It is for the Commissioners to decide whether they will buy only part of an estate.

MR. O'SHAUGHNESSY: Will the right hon. Gentleman ask the Commissioners to inquire into this matter before they advance any purchase money?

* MR. BRYCE: Clearly the matter is before them.

Donegal Fishing Industry.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, whether he has received a Memorial forwarded to him by the principal inhabitants of Dunkineely, adopted at a public meeting over which the Rev. John M'Nulty presided, praying for the construction of a pier and boat slip at the Scar, Ballydonnell, on the south side of St. John's Point, Inner Bay, county Donegal; and whether, having regard to to the necessity in the interests of the fishing industry and the protection of the lives of the fishermen of the district for the construction of this work, and that there is a sum available out of the £16,000, the marine grant to Donegal not yet allotted, he will favourably consider the request embodied in the memorial.

* MR. BRYCE: I have received the Memorial referred to. The claims of the locality will be considered if it should be found that further funds under the Marine Works Act are available for Donegal; but I think, as at present advised, that it may be found necessary to give priority to the claims of other places in the county of Donegal.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that there is a sum of £2000 or £3000 unappropiated of the amount allocated to Donegal?

* MR. BRYCE: I believe so, but if the hon. Member will consult his colleagues from Donegal he will hear that they have strong claims on it.

Goodbody Estate, Athenry.

MR. DUFFY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, if any communication has been received by the Estates Commissioners, respecting the allocation of the Goodbody estate, near Athenry, from the people of Athenry; and, having regard to the fact that a number of the townspeople have been in possession of portions of the estate for close on half a century, is it the intention of the Commissioners to deprive these people of the accommodation which they have enjoyed so long.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cliii., 864.

* MR. BRYCE: The estate in question was purchased by the Department of Agriculture for their own particular purposes; but the Department re-sold to the Estates Commissioners portion of the lands for distribution among the existing tenants of the estates, many of whose holdings were uneconomic. The Estates Commissioners have already distributed the land so purchased by them among the tenants in question.

MR. DUFFY: How many people applied for land.

* MR. BRYCE: I should like notice of that Question.

Monnerbawn Farm, Athenry.

MR. DUFFY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that 200 acres of the Monnerbawn Farm, Goodbody Estate, Athenry, has been sold to Mrs. Lopdell, and at what price; and whether he will state if, before selling it to an extensive landowner, steps were taken by the Estates Commissioners to find out how many people in the locality were willing to take holdings on this large farm.

*MR. BRYCE: The Estates Commissioners inform me that it has been arranged to sell a portion of this estate, comprising 311 acres of mountain land, to Mrs. Lopdell for £500. This land was not suitable for the enlargement of small holdings, but only for sporting purposes or for the planting of trees.

MR. DUFFY: Will the right hon. Gentleman inquire further.

*MR. BRYCE: Yes, if necessary; but it seems to me the Land Commissioners have already inquired into the matter.

MR. DUFFY: The feeling in the locality is quite opposed to the opinion expressed in the right hon. Gentleman's Answer.

MR. FLAVIN (Kerry, N.): Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that in all parts of Ireland where there are untenanted lands, the poor people are glad to get land to re-claim?

*MR. BRYCE: I am informed this land is rough mountain land which cannot be brought under cultivation. That is all I know.

Marlfield National School, Belfast.

MR. SLOAN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to scenes that have taken place at Marlfield National School, Belfast, owing to the eviction of the principal by the manager; if he has received a Resolution passed at a public meeting, held on the 4th instant, condemning the treatment meted out to the teacher, and will he say on whose authority and on what grounds has the school been closed; and whether, in view of the fact that in November last, at the instance of the manager, an inquiry was ordered with the view of having the teacher dismissed, and after consideration of the whole facts the Commissioner refused to sanction the same, he will order the school to be opened until proper inquiries are made as to the real offender in this matter.

*MR. BRYCE: The Commissioners of National Education inform me that their attention has been called to this matter, and that they have received the Resolution referred to. The school has been closed on the authority of the manager. In November last the manager applied to the Commissioners for their assent to the summary dismissal of the principal teacher, whereupon the Commissioners directed an inquiry to be held, as the outcome of which they expressed the opinion that in the circumstances of the case the dismissal of the teacher, without notice or salary in lieu of notice, would not be justified. The school-house in question is non-vested, and the Commissioners have, therefore, no power to interfere with the action of the manager in closing the school.

Mr. SLOAN: Have the Commissioners no power to interfere in such a case as this?

*Mr. BRYCE: I understand they have no power to prevent the closing of this school.

Mr. SLOAN: I must respectfully say the Commissioners are the referees in a case like this, and the managers have no right to act without their sanction.

*Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order! The hon. Member is not entitled to make a speech.

Irish Produce Commissioner in England.

Mr. JOYCE (Limerick): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will say how many candidates applied for the position of Irish Produce Commissioner in England; how many of the applicants were from Cork; and whether he would ascertain if the exporters of butter in Ireland would, while waiting for legislation, agree to have their places of business registered and subject to inspection by Government officials, and, further, be prepared to show to the inspectors from their books that the various kinds of butters received by them were sent out under their correct designations so that the producers and consumers might be protected from the losses caused to both sections by misrepresentation.

Mr. BRYCE: There were twenty candidates for the post of Inspector in connection with Irish agricultural produce in England, and four of these were from Cork. I am afraid that no practical good could come of such an inquiry as is suggested in the latter part of the Question. The matter there referred to is one which, as I understand, will receive the attention of the Committee on the Butter Trade which it is proposed to appoint forthwith.

Mr. FLYNN (Cork, N.): Is it not a fact that the man appointed had no practical acquaintance with the butter trade?

Mr. BRYCE: I was informed he had.

Mr O'SHAUGHNESSY: Who were the four applicants from Cork?

Mr. BRYCE: I have no information.

Ballinacurra Sewer Loan.

Mr. JOYCE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he has any further information with regard to the loan for the Ballinacurra sewer at Limerick; whether his attention has been called to the need for such sewer in the interest of the public health; and whether, seeing that the loan has been applied for, he will use his influence to have it issued without delay.

Mr. BRYCE: I have already informed the hon. Member that the Local Government Board have given their sanction to the raising of this loan. I understand that the Rural District Council have now applied to the Board of Works for the loan, and I must therefore refer the hon. Member to my hon. friend the Secretary to the Treasury, who will answer for the Board of Works.

Mr. JOYCE: I will put another Question in a week's time.

Roxborough Road School, Limerick.

Mr. JOYCE: I beg to ask Mr. Attorney-General for Ireland whether he has had any communications recently from the Borough Council of Limerick with regard to the Roxborough Road schools in that city; and, if so, whether he would state generally the purport of these communications, and lay them, with his Answers, upon the Table of the House.

*The ATTORNEY-GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. Cherry, Liverpool, Exchange): I have received communications from the Borough Council of Limerick with regard to the Roxborough Road schools in that city. These are at present engaging my attention, and I hope to be able to reply to them fully in a short time. Until I am able to do so I must ask the hon. Member to postpone the latter part of his Question.

Wexford County Council and Cattle Imports.

Sir THOMAS ESMONDE (Wexford, N.): I beg to ask the hon. Member for South Somerset, as representing the President of the Board of Agriculture, if he has received a Resolution, passed unanimously by the County Wexford County Council, opposing the removal of the restrictions now in force upon the importation of Canadian and foreign cattle into Great Britain; and if he will give due weight to this and similar resolutions in dealing with the question.

MR. SINCLAIR (for Sir EDWARD STRACHEY): We have received the Resolution in question, to which due notice will be given.

Protection of Irish Cattle against Disease.

MR. EDWARD BARRY (Cork County, S.): I beg to ask the hon. Member for South Somerset, as representing the President of the Board of Agriculture, whether he is aware that the punctual payment of their instalments by the farmers who have purchased their holdings in Ireland under the Land Purchase Act of 1903, is dependent on the stock-rearing and butter industry of that country; whether, in view of the necessity for the Irish people to adopt the best methods in the manufacture and marketing of butter, to successfully meet foreign competition, to maintain a continuity of supply throughout the winter months as well as in spring, summer, and autumn, so as to safeguard against giving a monopoly to foreign countries in an interval of shortage in Irish supply; and, seeing that an outbreak of infectious disease in Irish cattle would ruin the butter trade for a season or, until the disease could be successfully stamped out, permanently affect our standing in the markets of this country, will steps be taken to secure the dairy cattle of Ireland against an outbreak of foot-and-mouth diseases by maintaining the existing embargo against the introduction of Canadian store cattle into these countries.

MR. EDWARD BARRY had also given notice of the following Question: To ask the hon. Member for South Somerset, as representing the President of the Board of Agriculture, whether he is aware that the outbreak of the foot-and-mouth disease in 1882, caused loss to the stock-owners of Great Britain and Ireland, and also to the general consumers of meat in these countries as the result of the infection and the restrictions necessitated thereby; that the breeders of shorthorn and other pedigree cattle, and the general stock-owners who were dependent on those breeders for their bulls, sustained loss in having to use animals of inferior or no pedigree owing to the prohibition against removal from or to infected areas; and whether steps will immediately be taken to safeguard the general stock of the country, and to ensure an unbroken continuity of pedigree in the case of the pure-bred herds by a continuance of those precautions that have hitherto been adopted against the importation of Canadian and other cattle.

MR. SINCLAIR (for Sir EDWARD STRACHEY): Perhaps I may be allowed to answer the two Questions at the same time, and to say, without entering into a detailed examination of the various sections of his Questions, that we take note of the reasons urged by the hon. Member in support of the maintenance of the existing law as to the importation of cattle from abroad.

Importation of Live Cattle from Abroad.

MR. LONSDALE: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he is in a position to state the decision of the Government in reference to the maintenance of the present restrictions upon the importation of live cattle from abroad.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN, Stirling Burghs): A Bill dealing with the restrictions upon the importation of cattle is before the House, and the decision of the Government will be stated on the Second Reading of that Bill.

Speculation in South African Stocks.

MR. LONSDALE: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he is aware that the fall in South African stocks, as the result of the uncertainty and delay in the settlement of affairs in South Africa, has involved British investors in a loss which is estimated at upwards of £90,000,000 sterling, while business in the Transvaal is being crippled by the same cause; and whether speedy measures will be adopted to place the Government of the Transvaal upon a stable basis.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The Government are in no way responsible, as the hon. Gentleman appears to imply, for the results that he tells us have attended the financial operations which have been carried on in connection with the South African mines. The steps which are now being taken by His Majesty's Government will I hope result in placing the Government of the Transvaal upon a stable basis.

Indentured Labour in the Transvaal—No Royal Commission.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN (Birmingham, W.): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he will now advise His Majesty to appoint a Royal Commission of a judicial character, to examine and report upon the working of the system of indentured labour in the Transvaal, and upon the allegations made by certain of His Majesty's Ministers that the system constitutes a state of slavery or semi-slavery, and also to inquire whether the accusations of general cruelty and torture inflicted by British subjects on Chinese coolies are true; and, if they find them proved, to report the names of the persons concerned, and to advise as to the measures to be adopted to prevent in the future the possibility of proceedings so injurious to the honour of this country.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: No, Sir, we have no such intention.

Trade Advertisements and Beauty Spots.

MR. VINCENT KENNEDY: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he will consider the advisability of giving the Board of Trade or local public bodies the control of trade advertising and issuing licences for the same; and, in view of the fact that many beauty spots are disfigured at present, and that revenue is lost to the State, will he introduce legislation on the above lines.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The Questions raised by the hon. Gentleman require a little more attention than I have been in a position to give them. I sympathise with his desire to prevent the disfigurement of beautiful scenery, but whether this can be accomplished by the methods suggested by the hon. Gentleman I am not so sure.

Hop Cultivation and Chinese Labour.

MR. COURTHOPE: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he is aware that quantities of the hops imported into this country are grown by Chinese labour; and whether, in the interest of the working classes of this country, he will take steps to prevent such importation in future.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I am aware that considerable quantities of hops are imported into this country from abroad, notably from the United States, Belgium, Holland, and Germany, and as the hon. Gentleman and his Party are so deeply interested in this particular import I may add that New Zealand, Canada and other British possessions are also offenders in this respect. But I am not aware that Chinese labour is employed in any of these countries in connection with the cultivation of hops, unless it be on the Pacific Coast of the United States, from which region the imports for 1900 were 40 cwts.; for 1901, 165 cwts.; for 1902, 150 cwts., and for 1903 and 1904 nil.

MR. COURTHOPE: Will the right hon. Gentleman obtain information as to the action of the Dürst Hop Pool in employing Chinese labour?

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: That Question had better be put on the Paper.

Crime by Chinese Coolies in South Africa.

MR. MACKARNESS (Berkshire, Newbury): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether his attention has been called to the fact that during the last six months the Chinese labourers who have escaped from the Transvaal mines have committed upwards of fifty serious crimes upon the peaceable inhabitants of the Colony, including at least eight murders and many cases of housebreaking and assault; and what steps the Government intend to take to prevent the continuance of this evil.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The Secretary of State for the Colonies informs me that he has not yet received the Return of the crimes moved for by my hon. friend on the 21st of February, and he is therefore not aware whether the numbers stated in the Question are correct. He is asking Lord Selborne to indicate his views as to what further steps are possible to prevent crimes of this nature. I am satisfied that the Transvaal Government are fully alive to the necessity of effectually checking such outrages.

Sea Erosion.

MR. H. H. MARKS : I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he can state when it is proposed to appoint the Royal Commission to inquire into the defence of the coast from sea erosion and other kindred subjects.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN : No, Sir, I am not in a position to give the hon. Member any further information upon this subject.

Vote on Account—The Aliens Act.

SIR W. EVANS GORDON : On behalf of the hon. Member for the Wimbledon Division of Surrey, I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury if he will defer consideration of the Vote on Account (Report stage), in order to give Members sufficient opportunity to examine the new regulations of the Home Office under the Aliens Act.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN : No, Sir, I should be sorry to put any impediments in the way of an adequate discussion of the new regulations ; but I am afraid it is impossible to defer the consideration of the Report stage of the Vote on Account, and the new regulations are really confined in such a small compass that even if this were not the case, I doubt if any object would be served by postponement.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR (City of London): Can the Leader of the House give any information as to the business for to-morrow ?

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN said that on Thursday it was proposed to take the Army Estimates, Votes A and 1, and, if they were obtained, to take afterwards the Navy Estimates. The 12 o'clock rule must be suspended on Thursday for a very innocent purpose—namely, to obtain the necessary resolution in Ways and Means. This was only a formal matter, but if taken before 12 o'clock it would vitiate the character of the day as one of the allotted days for Supply.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN (Worcestershire, E.): Is the right hon. Gentleman in a position to say when the Budget statement is likely to be made.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN : Not yet.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN : Not before Easter ?

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN : I do not think so.

NEW BILLS.

CORONERS BILL.

"To dispense with the compulsory viewing of bodies on the holding of Coroners' Inquests," presented by Mr. Luke White; supported by Mr. Bramsdon, Mr. John Wilson, Mr. Cameron, Mr. Toulmin, Mr. Arthur Henderson, and Mr Summerbell ; to be read a second time upon Wednesday next, and to be printed. [Bill 100.]

CHARTERED SOCIETIES BILL.

"To provide for the further protection of Chartered Societies," presented by Mr. Harmood-Banner; supported by Sir James Woodhouse and Mr. John Henderson ; to be read a second time upon Thursday, March 22nd, and to be printed. [Bill 101.]

SUPPLY [MARCH 5TH] REPORT.

Resolution reported.

CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS ESTIMATES, 1906-7. (VOTE ON ACCOUNT.)

"That a sum, not exceeding £21,410,000, be granted to His Majesty, on account, for or towards defraying the charges for the following Civil Services and Revenue Departments for the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1907, viz. :—

CIVIL SERVICES.

CLASS II.

UNITED KINGDOM AND ENGLAND.

	£
Home Office - - - -	66,000

CLASS V.

	£
Diplomatic and Consular Services	250,000

CLASS II.

UNITED KINGDOM AND ENGLAND.

Local Government Board	86,000

CLASS I.

Royal Palaces	20,000
Osborne	8,000
Royal Parks and Pleasure Gardens	45,000
Houses of Parliament Buildings	20,000
Miscellaneous Legal Buildings, Great Britain	30,000
Art and Science Buildings, Great Britain	25,000
Diplomatic and Consular Buildings	54,000
Revenue Buildings	196,000
Public Buildings, Great Britain	200,000
Surveys of the United Kingdom	90,000
Harbours under the Board of Trade	6,000
Peterhead Harbour	10,000
Rates on Government Property	295,000
Public Works and Buildings, Ireland	110,000
Railways, Ireland	35,000

CLASS II.

UNITED KINGDOM AND ENGLAND.

	£
House of Lords Offices	7,000
House of Commons Offices	15,000
Treasury and Subordinate Departments	40,000
Foreign Office	24,000
Colonial Office	25,000
Privy Council Office, &c.	4,000
Board of Trade	85,000
Mercantile Marine Services	32,000
Bankruptcy Department of the Board of Trade	3
Board of Agriculture and Fisheries	55,000
Charity Commission	15,000
Civil Service Commission	17,000
Exchequer and Audit Department	25,000
Friendly Societies Registry	3,000
Lunacy Commission	5,000
Mint (including Coinage)	5
National Debt Office	6,000
Public Record Office	10,000
Public Works Loan Commission	1,000
Registrar-General's Office	15,000
Stationery and Printing	330,000
Woods, Forests, &c., Office of	8,000
Works and Public Buildings, Office of	34,000
Secret Service	40,000

SCOTLAND.

Secretary for Scotland, Office of	25,000
Fishery Board	5,000
Lunacy Commission	2,500
Registrar-General's Office	1,500
Local Government Board	5,000

IRELAND.

Lord-Lieutenant's Household	2,000
Chief Secretary for Ireland	12,000
Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction	80,000
Charitable Donations and Bequests Office	1,000
Local Government Board	25,000
Public Record Office	2,000
Public Works Office	16,000
Registrar-General's Office	5,000
Valuation and Boundary Survey	6,000

CLASS III.

UNITED KINGDOM AND ENGLAND.

Law Charges	40,000
Miscellaneous Legal Expenses	28,000
Supreme Court of Judicature	140,000
Land Registry	18,000
County Courts	5
Police, England and Wales	13,000
Prisons, England and the Colonies	340,000
Reformatory and Industrial Schools, Great Britain	130,000
Broadmoor Criminal Lunatic Asylum	12,000

SCOTLAND.

Law Charges and Courts of Law	30,000
Register House, Edinburgh	15,000
Crofters Commission, Scotland	2,000
Prisons, Scotland	37,000

IRELAND.

	£
Law Charges and Criminal Prosecutions - - -	30,000
Supreme Court of Judicature and other Legal Departments - - - -	43,000
Land Commission - - -	90,000
County Court Officers, &c. -	45,000
Dublin Metropolitan Police -	60,000
Royal Irish Constabulary -	600,000
Prisons, Ireland - - -	52,000
Reformatory and Industrial Schools - - - -	55,000
Dundrum Criminal Lunatic Asylum- - - -	4,000

CLASS IV.

UNITED KINGDOM AND ENGLAND.

Board of Education - -	7,000,000
British Museum - - -	70,000
National Gallery - - -	10,000
National Portrait Gallery -	3,000
Wallace Collection - -	3,000
Scientific Investigation, &c. -	24,000
Universities and Colleges, Great Britain, and Intermediate Education, Wales-	60,000

SCOTLAND.

Public Education - - -	850,000
National Gallery - - -	5,000

IRELAND.

Public Education - - -	760,000
Endowed Schools Commissioners - - - -	400
National Gallery - - -	2,500
Queen's Colleges - - -	2,500

CLASS V.

Colonial Services - - -	370,000
Telegraph Subsidies and Pacific Cable - - -	30,000
Cyprus (Grant in Aid) -	27,000

CLASS VI.

Superannuation and Retired Allowances - - -	300,000
Miscellaneous Charitable and other Allowances - -	1,150
Hospitals and Charities, Ireland - - - -	17,000
Savings Banks and Friendly Societies Deficiencies -	–

CLASS VII.

	£
Temporary Commissions -	20,000
Miscellaneous Expenses -	10,437
Repayments to the Local Loans Fund - - -	—
Ireland Development Grant -	100,000
Total for Civil Services	£13,980,000

REVENUE DEPARTMENTS.

Customs - - - -	350,000
Inland Revenue - - -	830,000
Post Office - - -	6,250,000
Total for Revenue Departments	£7,430,000
Grand Total - -	£21,410,000.”

Resolution read a second time.

MAJOR SEELY (Liverpool, Abercromby) moved to reduce the vote by the sum of £100. He said his object was to call attention to the Convention made between this country and China on May 13th, 1904. This was a matter well worthy the attention of the House, for by this Convention with China the whole system of indentured labour, to which exception had been taken by hon. Members on that side of the House, was made possible. Had it not been for that Convention, as he gathered from the correspondence, Chinese labour in the Transvaal could never have taken place. His particular point was that our Consuls were engaged in assisting in this traffic. The Secretary for Foreign Affairs told the House the other day that he was not aware that the Convention had anything particular to do with Chinese labour in South Africa, but in point of fact it was part and parcel of the whole arrangement, and the Chinese could not have proceeded to South Africa without it. He would draw the attention of the Under-Secretary to the correspondence which took place prior to signing the Convention. It showed conclusively that it was only signed in order to provide Chinese labour for South Africa. It therefore behoved them to consider whether they should not stop their Consuls from engaging in a traffic which they regarded as immoral and wrong. We should be placed in a ridiculous position if we allowed this thing to go on. He gathered from the Papers that it was in their power to stop it. The second article of the Convention provided that our Consuls should consult with the Tao-tais of the ports in order to obtain coolies. They were to make known by proclamation and through the native Press the text of the indenture the coolies would have to sign; and it was clear that at this moment they were acting as recruiting agents and were engaged in facilitating a system which had been described by the Lord Chancellor as one of semi-slavery. They also had, by Article 3, to fit up buildings to receive coolies prior to their embarkation, and in effect to act as gaolers, while under Article 4 they were called upon to act as gaolers, as these emigrants were not permitted to leave the depôt except on a pass signed by the Chinese inspector and countersigned by a British Consul. The British Consul was in fact made responsible for the safe keeping of these Chinese coolies. The situation was quite intolerable. The Foreign Office appeared to have had very little concern with this Convention; but, in his opinion, the matter required the urgent and careful thought of the Foreign Office as well as of the Colonial Office. The present Foreign Secretary was in no sense to blame, but it was apparent that the matter was rushed through because it was unpopular in this country. There was no reason why, because they did this in haste, they should repent at leisure. If repentance was to come—and hon. Members on the benches around him did repent—the sooner the better. He would ask the Under-Secretary for the Colonies whether he could give the House any indication of the steps it was proposed to take to put an end to this hateful system. If the Government had power to put a stop to it, it would be well if notification were given forthwith. Delay and uncertainty would cause distress to hon. Members who regarded the thing as wrong, and it would do harm to the industry in South Africa. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham had said that certain allegations made in the country with regard to Chinese labour had brought us into disrespect with foreign countries; but the posters in the right hon. Gentleman's constituency had nothing to do with that. What brought us into some contempt with foreign countries when we wished to intervene in the Congo was the fact that official documents showed that, contrary to the promise given to the Chinese Minister, these coolies had been ill-treated, and that, presumably in consequence, they had spread over the country and committed a series of outrages. The Chinese Minister demanded before the treaty was made, first, that Chinese labourers should not be flogged without due process of law, and, secondly, that they should not be transferred from one employer to another, and both these conditions had been evaded. This latter point was dealt with by the late Member for Lincolnshire in a speech which made a great impression on the last House of Commons, a speech in which he said it was a strange thing for this country to be taught its duty to an inferior race by the Minister for the Heathen Chinee. The Secretary of State could effectively intervene if he wished, because the Government could truly say that, in point of fact, we had not been able to fulfil either of the promises on the faith of which the Convention was signed, and he would ask the Under-Secretary whether he could not give an assurance that action would be taken, if possible, to bring the Convention to an end. He was aware that it did not come up for revision or renewal for a period of four years from the date of signature, but it was possible to abrogate it by consent, and the fact that we could not carry out our own undertakings would be a very good reason for abrogation. Had the Under-Secretary communicated to the High Commissioner the important decision of the Government to veto the employment of Chinese labour under conditions at all similar to the conditions under the Ordinance, and, if so, had he asked the High Commissioner to make that decision known among the future electors of the Transvaal? Now, while parties were being formed and pledges were being given in that Colony, there must be no misapprehension that Chinese labour could continue to be imported under a system described by the Lord Chancellor as semi-slavery. If once it was made perfectly well known to the Transvaal that His Majesty's Government would stop it at its source in China as well as make it impossible for any such system again to be reintroduced, then they would know at last that Chinese labour was at an end, and the people of this country would rest assured that they had done their duty by determining that a system they had denounced as semi-slavery should no longer exist.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean) formally seconded the Amendment.

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out '£21,410,000,' and to insert '£21,409,900.'"—(*Major Seely.*)

Question proposed, "That '£21,410,000' stand part of the Resolution."

*THE UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. CHURCHILL, Manchester, N.W.): I certainly do not quarrel with my hon. and gallant friend for having raised the question of the China Convention, because I think it will be admitted that the subject is one on which the House stands in need of information. I regret that in the debate on the Address I did not deal more fully with this subject, but I had already presumed on the indulgence of the House for a very considerable time, and I hardly dared embark upon the somewhat complicated details of this diplomatic instrument, and, in consequence of my unfortunate brevity, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham described all this apparatus of enlistment in China in a jaunty and scornful manner, and suggested that it was the intention of the Government—I am not sure he did not attribute it to me personally—to bring some influence to bear, I did not gather how, upon the Dowager Empress of China. But this China Convention is an instrument in itself not less effective, and I think far more convenient than the direct veto. It is an instrument which, used in conjunction with the direct veto, enables that veto to be exercised, if necessary, without raising in any direct manner the question of collision between the Colony and the mother-country, without infringing in any direct manner that principle of self-government which, on this side of the House at any rate, we are bound always to respect. The China Convention is based upon the Treaty of 1860. Article 5 of that Treaty stipulated that the Chinese Government should always allow its subjects to leave China for the purpose of labouring within the British dominions. Regulations were to be laid down later on, but no regulations were, in fact, made under the Treaty until the year 1904. The Convention of 1904 prescribed the regulations which really made the Treaty of 1860 effectively operative, and the Convention, like the Treaty, was general in its character. I may remind my hon. and gallant friend, when he speaks of wishing to abrogate the Treaty, that the question of Chinese Labour in South Africa, important and urgent as it is, is not by any means the only system of labour covered by the operations of the China Convention of 1904. Under that Convention and under the Treaty of 1860 the Chinese can go to the Straits Settlements, to the Federated Malay States, to Burmah, and to the Protectorate of British North Borneo. Of course they go freely to those places. They go there free if they wish to settle, they bring their wives and children with them, and sometimes they choose to do so because they are able to make a new home in those countries and to colonise them as well as to labour for their development. It seems to me that these tropical countries are well adapted to colonisation from China, and that a totally different question is raised when we are confronted with the system which prevails in the Transvaal. Let me ask the House to follow what is the operation of this Convention. On the notice of the British Minister at Pekin the Chinese Government instructs the local authorities at the Treaty Ports to facilitate emigration by every means in their power, and on receipt of these instructions the Tao-Tai appoints a Chinese inspector who, in conjunction with the British Consular officer, or his delegate, supervises the details of the emigration. My hon. and gallant friend is quite right in stating that the action of the British Consular officer is essential to the carrying out of the Chinese Labour Ordinance. It is the linch pin on which the whole of that system depends, and the action of the British Consular officer or of his delegate is essential both in regard to the signature of the contract and also in regard to making it clear that the emigrant understands fully the terms of the contract. In practice the Consuls delegated these important functions under the late Administration to the emigration agents of the Transvaal Government, and these agents derived their only legal status and exercised their powers solely in virtue of this delegation by the British Consular officer. The

House will see that the Treaty with China binds her to permit and actively assist in the emigration of Chinese coolies from China. Without it China would not be bound to allow the coolies to go, and it is extremely improbable she would allow any large number to go, for, even with the Treaty in force, the Viceroys of the southern provinces have steadily blocked emigration from the south. We are asked, first, how can we abrogate this Treaty? My hon. and gallant friend is quite right when he says we can give notice in the first instance at the end of four years from May 13th, 1904, when the Convention was signed, to terminate it in one year, or by the consent of China—and I am not at all able to say whether China would be reluctant to consent to such abrogation—we could abrogate it at once. But if we did that it would affect other countries; it would affect emigration to those other tropical countries to which the Chinese now go to labour, and in which, when they go, they are, by the operation of the Convention, protected and supervised in the process of emigration by British Consular officers. Therefore, if it were possible, without interfering with the general structure of the Treaty, to separate that portion of the Ordinance affecting the Transvaal from the other, I have no doubt that it would meet the view of my hon. and gallant friend, and of those who think with him. And it happens that there is such a third method—that of instructing the Consular officers to resume the functions which they have delegated to the emigration agents of the Transvaal Government. If they do that, the Convention becomes, so far as the Transvaal is concerned, a dead letter, because the provisions of the Ordinance cannot be applied except through the Consular officer delegating his authority or exercising it himself. If he is instructed to resume the authority, and not to exercise it himself again, unless he receives instructions from the Government, the whole of the Chinese Ordinance will be put out of gear, and no Chinaman can be enlisted under it, although they will still be free to go to the Transvaal under the same conditions as to other countries. That, briefly, is what His Majesty's Government propose to do. As I have told the House already this session, when we came into office we found ourselves confronted with 16,000 of these outstanding licences, which a prudent forethought or "an intelligent anticipation of events" had placed at the disposal of the mine owners in South Africa. To the carrying out of these contracts His Majesty's Government have been reluctantly compelled to consent, and the House has not less reluctantly agreed to that course by an overwhelming majority. While this importation continues it is impossible for us to revoke all the delegation of authority which the Consuls have made to the labour emigration agents, but in June or July of the present year these licences will have been worked out and the coolies contracted under them will be already on their way to South Africa. As soon as that has taken place, instructions will be given to our Consuls to cancel the powers they have delegated to the Transvaal emigration agency, and they will not take part in any further recruitments or enlistments until they are further instructed from home. If we do that we shall have turned the tap off, and if the tap is turned off, anyone who calculates how long a three years' agreement will take to expire and who studies the date when the coolies arrived will be able to tell the date when they will sail once again for their own country. But will that tap ever be turned on again? Well, Sir, that depends first of all upon the Transvaal Assembly. Within a year—I hope within a shorter period of time—the Transvaal will be a responsible self-governing Colony upon the general model of all self-governing Colonies which are to be found throughout the British Empire. As soon as that constitution is settled and the Transvaal Government is invested with its new powers, His Majesty's Government will fix a date when the existing labour Ordinance which was passed in the last House of Commons will come to an end. That will be fixed so as to allow the new Government in the Transvaal to take a reasonable survey of its affairs and to examine this labour question in all its bearings. My hon. and gallant friend asks me whether Lord Selborne has been notified of the new policy of His Majesty's Government. Quite apart from the electric telegraph which conveys regular, though somewhat one-sided, accounts of our proceedings in this House to South Africa, Lord Selborne is in daily communication at great length and considerable expense with my noble friend Lord Elgin, and my hon. and gallant friend may be quite sure that there is no decision announced by the Government to Parliament which Lord Selborne is not regularly apprised of, and of which South Africa does not become speedily aware. In the interval, until the potential Transvaal Assembly, the future Transvaal Assembly, has been formed, so far as the weight and influence of the Ministry can be thrown on one side or the other, it will be thrown in the direction of convincing the people of South Africa that the importation of 60,000 coolies under the conditions of the Chinese Ordinance is not a sure or satisfactory way to found a state. Unless within the time fixed by the date on which the Ordinance will automatically expire the Transvaal Assembly bring forward new proposals, the whole system of Chinese labour will automatically fall to the ground. No more Chinese will come in, and by that time those who first arrived will be on their homeward journey or about to start. Of course no new contracts or re-enlistments will be possible; the whole system will therefore come to an end within a time which may be accurately fixed.

Now, Sir, let us look at the other alternatives. I have always tried to argue this question quite fairly, and let the House see exactly what is the position of the Government, and what are the great difficulties and considerations, which on every hand, harass and hamper our action upon this question. Suppose, on the other hand, that the Transvaal Government make new proposals to us. We must subject those proposals to a searching examination, and no doubt there will be much correspondence before they are brought before the Transvaal in a definite and practical form. [OPPOSITION dissent.] I should imagine that there would be communications between our representatives in South Africa and the Colonial Office, and we should endeavour to show them what were the real objections entertained in this country to the Ordinance.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN (Birmingham, W.): Does the hon. Gentleman anticipate that the Ministers of a self-governing colony would consult Downing Street before introducing a measure to their own Parliament?

*MR. CHURCHILL: I should imagine that on a subject of this character it would not be impossible for informal communications to pass; but this is an entirely subsidiary point, and in any case the Government will be prepared to use the veto of the Crown without shrinking if the conditions of any proposal that may reach us from the Transvaal, no matter by how great a majority it may be supported, are really derogatory to the fundamental and elementary principles of liberty, and, I may say, of decency also. I do not for a moment minimise the importance of a veto of the Crown against a responsibly governed colony upon a matter in which the material interest of the colony is directly affected and the material interest of this country only indirectly affected, for that would be a very serious event in British colonial history. I do not for a moment attempt to minimise the importance of such a step, and I hope the House will not overlook that point. Hitherto in dealing with the Chinese question the Government have been able to act with the full sympathy of all the self-governing Colonies of the Empire. We have endeavoured to give effect to the wishes and desires of all those great Colonies who took part in the South African war, and who considered, like a great many of the working classes here who supported the war, that they had some right to be consulted as to the use that should be made of the victory. I hope that that sympathy and agreement will be preserved during the conduct of these difficult and delicate negotiations. I hope that in relieving the Empire from what we consider a stain we shall have the moral authority that comes from common agreement among great and scattered communities. Here is where the importance of the Chinese Convention comes in, for I look upon its machinery as something like a pneumatic buffer which would prevent the direct impact of a veto and prevent the raising of the great issues of self-government. The Government are not only asked for assent but for assistance, not only to acquiesce but actively to assist, and surely in common reason the Government are entitled to refuse participation and responsible co-operation in a business for which they have so little liking.

Having said so much, perhaps I may be allowed to say one thing more on the subject which arises directly out of the Question asked by my hon. and gallant friend. What chance is there of the Transvaal proposals being acceptable if ever they are put forward? I feel bound to say I think the chance is not at all a good one. The Chinese are attacked here and in South Africa from two opposite points of view. Every restriction which South Africa demands on the ground of safety, we refuse on the ground of freedom; they dislike the Chinese, and we dislike the precautions they take against them. I really wonder whether it is worth while for an industry which depends so largely upon public confidence to establish itself upon the precarious footing of the chance of a compromise being reached in the future—in the not too remote future—a compromise to which not only the Transvaal Assembly, but the House of Commons will have to be parties. It is high time that the leaders of this great industry should face the facts of the situation. The House of Commons has exercised great restraint in spite of every taunt flung at the Government by the very persons who are responsible for this state of things in South Africa, and who have repeatedly assured us that the Empire depends upon this unsavoury system. I recognise the moderation the House has shown, and hope the Government will be permitted to proceed prudently and firmly to the end I have endeavoured to outline. The leaders of the mining industry here and in South Africa ought to recognise also the forbearance of the House of Commons. If it relieves their feelings to abuse the Government, by all means let them continue to do so. Surely it is about time they should leave off wringing their hands and weeping and wailing over the prospect of Chinese labour lost, and turn with manly energy to the discovery of some less unnatural substitute. Reasonable time is now given for them to look around. Reasonable time is now given for the transition to be effected. His Majesty's Government wish them no ill. Every law-abiding man—every lawful industry is a matter of serious concern to those who now are responsible for the direction of public affairs. Still more is the welfare and prosperity of the great city, which is, after all, the economic main-spring of South Africa. For my part I have always thought it wholly absurd to pretend that the prosperity and even the existence of the Witwatersrand Reef depended on the labour of 60,000 Chinese. I do not apprehend that any disastrous collapse will result from their gradual withdrawal. Bubble companies may break, rotten flotations may founder, shares which have been forced up far above their value may fall to their natural level, but I do not believe that any intrinsically valuable property—and after all we are dealing with the most valuable goldfield in the whole world—will be injured, or that the flow of gold from South Africa to this country, which so strongly and powerfully stimulates enterprise and credit in this country, will be sensibly or suddenly reduced. I am inclined to think that the arrangements which are made in South Africa to-day for recruiting native labour are wholly inefficient, and that a reorganisation of those arrangements might be found to produce much larger supplies of labour out of the enormous native population. But I would suggest as a preliminary to that reorganisation that the conditions of labour should be made more attractive, that, at any rate, the men should be paid for working in the bowels of the earth not less than is offered for working on the surface on farms in the country, and that the natives should be permitted to some extent to choose their own mine so that they may avoid a few mines which have a name for unusual severity, or where, perhaps, a particular native may remember that he has been ill-treated. I was told the other day what the conditions of labour are in Western Australia in connection with the Ivanhoe Gold Corporation. That mine is working at a depth of 1,200 to 1,300 feet—working the most difficult ore in the world. It is hampered by the cost of water, which, I believe, is 5s. per thousand gallons. I give these figures under reserve. Wood, which is the fuel there, costs a price equivalent to that of coal at 30s. per ton. The one great advantage there is that food is cheap. Compare these facts with those now prevailing on the Witwatersrand. There the mines are working at a depth of between 1,000 feet and 1,200 feet. The ore is amongst the easiest to work in the world. The value of coal is, I believe, 7s. per ton at the pit's mouth, and has to be brought a very short distance. Water is cheap and abundant, and only the cost of living is expensive. The wages of manual labour in the

Ivanhoe mine average about 12s. 6d. per day, and the mine is worked entirely with white labour. I believe that the lowest wage paid below ground is 10s. per day. The Ivanhoe mine is able to crush quartz at 24s. per ton, including an ample margin for development, against 22s. 8d. per ton, including 1s. 7d. for development, in the Transvaal in the year 1904–5. I do not say that these figures are conclusive.

SIR GILBERT PARKER (Gravesend): May I ask for information as to the yield of gold per ton in the Ivanhoe mine, and the yield of gold per ton on the Rand?

*MR. CHURCHILL: My hon. friend does not seem to understand that the cost of treating a ton of ore is alone in question. It is quite true that there may be more profit per ton in one place than in the other. The hon. Gentleman is looking to profit. I was thinking of the working expenses which, after all, occasionally deserve consideration. As I have stated, I do not say that these figures are conclusive, but I think they are stupendous. I put that forward with all moderation, and I ask you to consider that the Ivanhoe is worked with the dearest labour of the kind, and that the mines on the Witwatersrand Reef are worked with the cheapest and worst labour in the world—clumsy Kaffirs and sullen Chinese who leave before they have time to become skilful workmen. But let me say that in the last two years the productivity of the Ivanhoe mine has increased by over 50 per cent. as against practically no increase in the labour efficiency of the South African mines. But, as I say, I do not wish to draw any decided conclusion from that. I hope that in the next few months we shall be able to go much more thoroughly into all these matters, and I trust they may be fully discussed. But I am anxious that we should not abandon the hope of having the South African mines worked more largely by white labour. I hope I have said enough to show that His Majesty's Government, while adhering to the policy declared to Parliament, are willing to consider in a reasonable spirit any practical or reasonable alternative which may be suggested, and, most of all, that we would encourage the increased employment of white labour in South Africa, which would not only support the industry but sustain the British flag in the Colonies.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR (City of London): The debate which, unexpectedly to me at all events, has been initiated by the hon. Gentleman below the gangway and carried on by the Under-Secretary for the Colonies is one which, everybody must admit, whatever view he takes upon the particular controversies which have raged round this question for months past, raises a question of the most fundamental importance, not merely as regards public morality, but as regards the basis on which our Empire, largely composed of self-governing elements, can be expected to subsist. The House will recognise that it would be very easy for me to make play, if I thought it worth while, with all the subtleties which hon. Gentlemen opposite have indulged in with regard to the distinction between that which is slavery, that which is semi-slavery, that which can be described as slavery, and I know not how many other methods of manipulating that word, which would have puzzled a sixteenth century casuist. But I think the question is really too serious, after the speech which has just been delivered, for it to be worth anybody's while, this afternoon at all events, to make points against the speeches which have been delivered in this House or in the country by hon. Gentlemen opposite, or to knock their heads together, however easy that process may be. I do not mean to do it. But what I do want to call the attention of the House to is this. The hon. and gallant Member who initiated this debate asked the Government what they meant to do with regard to the China Convention. I understand from the explanations of the Under-Secretary for the Colonies that China is obliged, by the treaty of 1860, to permit and even in certain circumstances to encourage the emigration of Chinese labourers to British possessions; that by the regulations entered into in 1904 the British Consuls have delegated their powers to the agents of the mines; and that the British Consuls who are alone the legitimate channel through which this process can be carried on, might be instructed to withdraw these delegated powers, to reserve them to themselves, and then under orders from home not to use them at all. That, I understand, is a brief and not inaccurate summary of the view of the Under-Secretary, and I understood him to say that that was what the Government actually contemplated. Do they contemplate doing it at once?

*MR. CHURCHILL: I said as soon as the existing contracts are concluded.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Then what do they propose to do in this connection after they have given self-government to the Colony? Supposing they come to some agreement with the Colony, are they then going to instruct their Consuls?

*MR. CHURCHILL: Yes; if we come to an agreement on a system that we regard as proper there will be no objection to our Consuls carrying it out.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I understood the hon. Gentleman to say that there will be a hiatus of some months after the existing contracts are concluded and before self-government is granted to the Colony in which the Consuls will be instructed practically to offer no encouragement at all to Chinese immigration.

*MR. CHURCHILL: In which there will be no immigration at all.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: May I ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether, without intervention on the part of the Consuls, it would be possible for a Chinaman, supposing he got permission or eluded the prohibition of the local Chinese officials, to emigrate to South Africa, and there take up his position in the mines under the existing regulations?

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir EDWARD GREY, Northumberland, Berwick): Of course there is nothing to prevent the Chinese Government from doing what they like.

*MR. CHURCHILL: The Chinaman could go freely; but he would not go under the Ordinance. He would only go to South Africa as a free man.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I should say that the Chinaman would not go as a free man. He would go under the contract which he chooses to make with his employers. Supposing the contract he proposed to make with his employers was the precise contract granted under the Ordinance?

*MR. CHURCHILL: It would not be a legal contract.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Then it would be impossible, according to the Government, for a Chinaman, however willing or desirous to enter the Transvaal under the existing system of employment, to work for employers, however willing to carry out that arrangement?

*MR. CHURCHILL: I understand it would not be possible.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Whether that is a contribution or not to human freedom, I do not know.

MAJOR SEELY: It is the law of England. I think it is admitted by every legal authority that no man can contract himself in this country under such terms as those of the labour Ordinance, because the law would not permit it.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: That has nothing to do with the Transvaal or British Guiana. It does not effect the argument. I am obliged to the hon. Gentleman. I never object to his interruptions, but I do object to interruptions which have nothing to do with the argument in hand. I hope the Secretary of State will make this point quite clear. Supposing the British Consuls were forbidden to act in this matter at all, under the Treaty of 1860, would it be possible for any Chinamen to enter the Transvaal under conditions similar to those under which he enters the Transvaal at the present time?

*SIR EDWARD GREY: The Convention does not bind the Chinese Government not to do anything. They can allow what they please to go on in China, apart from the Convention. But they cannot force us in the Transvaal to recognise what they have done in China.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: But would there be any legal difficulty in the way of a Chinaman who desires to enter the Transvaal under the existing conditions? There was one part of the Under-Secretary's speech which I profoundly regret, and that was the threat which he held out to the existing mine owners in South Africa.

After all, the interest that this country takes in any industry is, and ought to be, the interest it takes in that which makes for the prosperity of the community in which that industry prevails. It is not whether this or that rich man is to be made richer or poorer by this or that operation. What we must recognise in this House is that the Transvaal is as dependent on the gold industry—is far more dependent on it—than we are, or ever have been, on any single industry; and if that industry be really injured, you cannot measure the effect of it by its consequences upon the income of this or that wealthy man in England, or of the multitude of humble shareholders in mines in this country, though their interests are worth consideration. The main point is, what will happen to the Transvaal itself? It is from that point of view only that we ought to regard that great problem. I do think that for the hon. Gentleman to threaten the mineowners, to threaten the industry with this or that consequence if they do not at once fall in with the views of His Majesty's Government, is to use the powers which the Government possess in this House in a manner which is most detrimental to the general welfare of the Empire. It is an enterprise, no doubt like all other industrial enterprises, conducted for the profit of those who carry it on. But it is upon this enterprise that the wealth and prosperity of the Transvaal depends—the power of paying its debts, its power of affording a field of occupation to white men—[MINISTERIAL cries of "Oh!"]—its contentment, and its place in the great heirarchy of the British Empire. That is not a matter to be considered from the point of view of small shareholders or big shareholders, but from a far wider standpoint, and when I heard the Under-Secretary, speaking on behalf of the Government, threatening this industry, on which the whole social and industrial fabric of the Transvaal now depends, with pains and penalties if it does not at once fall in with the views of His Majesty's special advisers, I confess that in my belief, if the hon Gentleman has truly represented the views of the Government, as I have no doubt he has, it is an evil day for the management of the great Colonial work for which this House is responsible. But it is not that observation of the hon. Gentleman which makes me most unhappy. There are other things which fell from him which filled me with despair, or, at all events, with a profound anxiety for the future of our relations with the self-governing Colonies. What are we to understand the policy of the Government to be from the speech to which we have just listened? It is a policy by which the Government, during the period in which they are responsible for the affairs of the Transvaal, mean to put an end as far as they can to the existing system. Before complete self-government is given to the Colony, they mean to fix a date after which the Ordinance is to have no effect; and then they will leave it to the colony to determine whether they shall or shall not produce a new Ordinance which may happen to suit the views of His Majesty's Government. That is the policy which, I understand, is approved by gentlemen of all shades of opinion on that side of the House. I do not see how you are going to deal with self-government on those principles. I perfectly understand, although I do not agree with, the policy of a Government who should say, "We object to the existing system of Chinese indentured labour. Some of us think it slavery: some of us think it half-slavery; some of us think it partakes of the nature of slavery; some of us think it a servile condition; and others have objections to it of various kinds. Therefore we, being responsible for the government of the Transvaal, mean to put an end to it." That is an intelligible position. There is another policy which is also intelligible, and which says, "We do not profess to judge of this question. We think the Transvaal has reached the point at which its mature judgment may be trusted. We mean to endow it, as we have endowed Canada and the Commonwealth of Australia and New Zealand, with complete control of its own affairs; and we should no more think of interfering with the management of its affairs after we have given it these powers than we think of interfering with the self-government of Canada, of the Commonwealth of Australia, or of New Zealand." That also is intelligible. But what is the policy of the Government? It is a hybrid between these two policies—an unnatural mixture of these two schemes of dealing with your dependencies. On the one hand, you say that you are making the Colony self-governing; and at the very same moment that you tell them that you also inform them that, as regards the industry on which their whole prosperity depends, they are not to be masters in their own house. They are to be the slaves of the Foreign Office [MINISTERIAL cries of "Oh"] as far as China is concerned, and the slaves of the Colonial Office as far as the forms of any future Ordinance is concerned. This Colony which you profess to endow with all the privileges you have given to Canada and to Australia with regard to its nearest and dearest interests is to be put under the heel of Downing Street. The Under-Secretary, who made so able a contribution to our debate, has not been very long a denizen of the office which he holds with such distinction. But I think that even his experience, brief and imperfect as it necessarily has been, through no fault of his, has informed him by this time that there is nothing which produces a keener jealousy and more bitter antagonism in the Imperial relations than interference from Downing Street with the affairs of self-governing Colonies. How many cases have there been in the last twenty years with regard to Canada, Australia, New Zealand, the Cape, or Natal, in which this House and the Government of the King, who are dependent upon this House for their very existence—how many cases have there been when interference has been tried with the legislation of the Colonies, dealing with their own internal affairs? I doubt whether there has been one. I am quite sure there has not been one in regard to a question in which the interests of every man in the Colony were directly or indirectly concerned, in which its whole future, its financial prosperity, its manufacturing and economic standing were involved—I am quite sure that there is not one, in which this House, or the Government dependent upon this House, having given the great boon of self-government to those Colonies, have ventured to take it away in any particular case. I venture to tell the House, with all respect, but with a feeling of deep anxiety, that the policy which they are now pursuing is a policy which must lead to disaster. I think the Government are profoundly mistaken, and that they will be committing a grave error if they say to these Colonists of ours, "If you are not pursuing a course consonant with our ideas, we still have control over you, and that control we mean to exercise, whether you like it or not. You are still *in statu pupillari* and you must submit." I think that would be the greatest folly, but it is wisdom compared with the course they mean to pursue, because the course they mean to pursue is to say, "You are no longer a child, you have grown to years of discretion; you have all the elements which enable you to manage your own affairs without interference from home; we give you full self-government, but we do not give you that part of self-government which most concerns your commercial prosperity and welfare. We put you in a position which Canada and Australia would not stand, and unless you carry out the dictation of Downing Street to the letter, we tell you that we shall use our diplomatic power with China to keep your industries down—we tell you that we shall disallow your Ordinance and modify any regulation which you make which does not happen to square with our ideas, and we trust you will make the best of that position." All I can say is, that no British Ministry has tried to manage the British Empire upon these principles, and no Ministry ever will manage the affairs of the British Empire with success upon these principles. These gentlemen, however highly endowed they may be by nature ["Oh"], however rich they may be in experience—and I do not doubt either their ability or their experience—however well endowed they may be in all these great qualities—I tell them that they will most unquestionably fail if they attempt a task which their predecessors have never tried, and embark upon and undertake an experiment which has never entered into the head of any wise statesman, Liberal, Radical, or Tory, in the last generation, which would have been laughed out of court by all the great masters of Colonial policy, and which, if persisted in, as I gather it is to be persisted in by the present Government, can bring nothing but disaster to our great Colonial Empire.

*SIR EDWARD GREY: I had no intention of intervening in this debate after the speech of my hon friend the Under-Secretary for the Colonies, and I only rise now because the right hon. Gentleman opposite has asked me a Question and demanded an Answer.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I did not demand, I requested.

*SIR EDWARD GREY: I did not use the word demand in that sense. I am quite willing to answer the Question to the best of my ability. My first difficulty has been in understanding it, and if I did, I do not know what bearing it has upon the subject of discussion. The Question I understand was this. Supposing this Convention was abrogated would there be anything to prevent the Chinese Government allowing its subjects to be recruited in China for employment in the Transvaal?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: That is not the Question.

*SIR EDWARD GREY: Will the right hon. Gentleman put the Question to me again?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I assume the Treaty of 1902 to be still in operation. I wanted to know whether, if our Consuls were forbidden to take part in this recruiting, it could be done by private individuals?

*SIR EDWARD GREY: That is the same Question. I do not mind which way it is put. Of course there would be nothing to prevent the Chinese Goverment from allowing its subjects to be recruited if they pleased. They are perfectly free now, if they decide to do so, to allow their own subjects to be sold into slavery, and will always be so, but even if they were allowed to leave China under those conditions they would not be allowed to land in any place in the British Empire. On landing the *status* of slavery would not protect them. Now supposing the Chinese Government, without going so far as that, were to say, "We will allow our subjects to be recruited privately for the Transvaal, and we will allow them to be bound by certain restrictions which provide that they are not be be employed in anything but unskilled labour, and are not to be allowed to settle in the country," I imagine that if the Ordinance of the Transvaal were repealed, none of those conditions would be recognised by law. Therefore I come back to this—I do not see the object of the Question, because while the Chinese Government has the right to do anything it likes in its own country, it has nothing to do with what would be permitted on British territory. As to the Convention itself, I said the other day that I do not understand what the Convention has to do in this matter. As my hon. friend said very properly, the Convention is the linch pin. Although the Chinese Government could allow recruiting in China without the Convention, I understand, as a matter of fact, it has so much regard for the welfare and prospects of its own subjects, that it would not allow them to be recruited without some Convention of of this kind. Consuls were named in the Convention in 1902 to carry out certain powers, but, as a matter of fact, there has been no Consular action lately. Since 1904 they have delegated their authority to the Transvaal agents, and all the recruiting has consequently been done, not by the Consuls, but by the Transvaal agents delegated for the purpose. Those delegates have discharged functions under the Convention, but it is open to the Imperial Government to tell the Consuls either not to renew this delegation or to withdraw it. What my hon. friend has said is that when the existing licences have run out, there will be no more recruiting in China; and that will be made effective by the Consuls withdrawing delegation. That, I think, is perfectly simple and plain. But that does not alarm the right hon. Gentleman opposite very much. What does alarm him is that the time may come when, under responsible Government, the Transvaal Government, being a self-governing and responsible Colony, may say it is desirable to resume the importation of Chinese labour, and then the Imperial Government may say, "We refuse to allow our Consuls to delegate powers of recruiting under the Convention." The right hon. Gentleman anticipates that it will bring a very serious state of affairs into the relations of the Transvaal and the Imperial Government.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: No, I said there were two dangers, both relating to a collision between the Home Government and the self-governing Colony. One was that the Home Government would use its diplomatic power to defeat and thwart the self-governing Colonies, and the second was, that it would use its power of veto for the same object.

*Sir EDWARD GREY: I will deal with the first point, viz., that we should use our power to defeat and thwart the self-governing Colonies. What would happen would be this. The Colony, being under responsible government, would go to other countries, and would say to us at home, "Will you use your diplomatic influence to help us to carry out what we want?" If you refused to do that except under proper conditions, you would not be using your diplomatic influence to thwart the Colony. The position, then—and I think the right position—is this. So far as we know the disposition of the Chinese Government they will not permit recruiting unless they have some guarantees that the conditions will be properly observed by the recruiters, and they seek for those guarantees through the diplomatic sanction of the Consular authorities in China. Therefore Chinese recruiting cannot go on without the diplomatic machinery being set in motion to promote it. I think the only right and dignified position for the Imperial Government is to lay down, once and for all, that the Imperial diplomatic machinery will not be allowed to be used over any part of the Empire for an improper purpose. That is the position that has been laid down by my hon friend the Under-Secretary for the Colonies. The right hon. Gentleman anticipates from that still more conflict between the self-governing Colony and the Colonial Office and the Foreign Office. I decline to believe that when the Transvaal has got responsible government, freely elected, on a proper suffrage and with a full sense of responsibility, there will be a moral conflict between the Colony and the mother country. My opinion from listening to the debate was that my hon. friend the Under-Secretary said that that was what might happen under certain conditions, but he did not anticipate that those conditions would arise, and that the right hon. Gentleman as a skilful debater would, and I do not complain, translate that into an anticipation that a conflict would probably occur. A serious moral question he called it, and I do not believe it would happen. It is equally right to say that there are probabilities of serious moral questions arising from a responsible community of white men in this country. The position we take up, and I think the right position, is that the industry of the Transvaal should be based on labour employed under conditions which are neither unnatural nor unwholesome. We are told that we are embarking upon a course which may endanger the Imperial sentiment. If we reverse this Ordinance we shall be reversing something which is already repugnant to to moral sense. The right hon. Gentleman brought in Canada, Australia, and New Zealand. The sentiment of His Majesty's Government throughout in this matter has been one which has commanded the sympathy and approval of all those Colonies. I believe that if the occasion ever arises when that sentiment has to be translated into action, it will also command that sympathy and approval; but I do not believe an occasion of that kind will arise. I believe that when the Transvaal has its responsible Government—whether it wishes to continue the importation of Chinese labour is doubtful—but if it does desire to continue it, I believe there will be no difficulty in arriving at an agreement between the Transvaal, as a self-governing Colony, and the mother country, that the importation shall continue only under conditions which are neither offensive nor repugnant to public sentiment in this country or in the other great self-governing Colonies.

Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN: All Members of this House who have listened to the last three speeches will agree with me as to the enormous importance of the matter we are discussing and the desirability that we should come to a right understanding upon what, after all, is really a very complicated subject. I have noticed now and again some interruptions and some hilarity. I think interruptions, except for the purpose of explanation, and hilarity are altogether out of place. We will endeavour to make our point of view clear, and we will ask you in return to make your point of view clear. We are not desirous of making a mere party point. The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs tells us, and no doubt it is the opinion of gentlemen on that side of the House, that Chinese indentured labour, in the circumstances in which it is carried on in the Transvaal, is repugnant to the moral sense. That is, of course, an extremely strong declaration of opinion, and I am perfectly prepared to agree that as it has been represented it is regarded with intense dislike, not only by the majority of this House, but probably by a majority of British subjects. We think, however, there is a mistaken apprehension of what is going on. We think that if we really knew exactly what are the conditions of this labour, your moral sense would not be affronted in the way in which it is. We are entitled to hold that opinion—and, remember this, we at all events show our sincerity by pressing on the Government in the most urgent terms to send out an impartial Commission to deal with the subject. We do not believe that our fellow-subjects in South Africa are knowingly consenting to what would be repugnant to our moral sense, and therefore we think there has been the grossest exaggeration in the reports that have come home. While we give you every credit for honesty of opinion, we think you are deluded and mistaken. Why, then, if the Government are so confident, why, recognising as they must do, after this debate if not before, the extraordinary importance of the questions with which we are dealing, why do they insist upon hastily and prematurely giving their opinion and coming to their decision without making the inquiry for which we ask? We ask them to appoint a Royal Commission representing the economic as well as the moral questions which are involved. Send out your best engineers to inquire into the economic question. What authority has the Under-Secretary for the Colonies upon a mining question? I have the greatest respect for him, but neither he nor, I believe, any one in this House alone, has any right to decide in regard to the Transvaal whether or not that great industry can be carried on without the use of extraneous labour. Let the question be decided by the very best engineers whose services can be obtained by the Government. As to the moral question, I have asked the Government, and it has been refused to me to-day, to send out a Royal Commission, and it should be a judicial Commission, to inquire into the working of this Ordinance and how the system is being administered. If it be true that it is slavery, or semi-slavery, or has the taint of slavery, or any of the other expressions by which it has been designated by the other side, we on this side will be just as ready as you to say it ought not to continue. But do let us have authoritative knowledge on this subject. My second point is this—if you will not do that, if you are certain you know all about it, why do you allow this thing, which is repugnant to your moral sense, to continue for four, five, or, it may be, ten years? Why, holding this opinion, since you can stop it, do you not stop it? I do not want to use too strong language or to be carried away by a natural indignation on account of the way this subject has been prostituted for Party purposes; but I say that this system can be stopped immediately if you choose. It is only a question of money, and that is a small matter in relation to a question of morality which you profess to believe is here involved. How can you consistently, with moral indignation mantling upon your cheek, let a few hundred thousand pounds deter you from stopping this slavery? I do not think the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs understands, even now, the point of my right hon. friend. I daresay I shall not be more successful. It is rather a difficult question. Some hon. Gentlemen opposite seem to regard this matter as a joke. I cannot understand that kind of treatment of a matter of this sort. That has not been the treatment given to questions of this kind in previous Parliaments. It justifies the statement of the Prime Minister about the tone and temper upon which he relies. Our first point is this:—assuming you refuse to deal with the matter yourselves and postpone it till the new responsible Government has been created in the Transvaal, if that Transvaal Government takes your view, if it holds this system is repugnant to the moral sense, then, *cadit quœstio* there is an end of it. Of course, in these circumstances the system will stop and no further Chinamen will be imported into the Transvaal. But our point is that if the new responsible Government does not take your view, if it wants these Chinamen, and if it makes Ordinances to allow them to come in as indentured labourers, then no interference of yours with the Chinese Government will have any effect at all, and you are deluding the House by professing, as you do, that you have got the matter in your own hands, and that by refusing your diplomatic assistance you can thwart a self-governing Colony which is determined to have these men. All you can really do is to deprive these men of the protection which the Convention was intended to give them; for the whole meaning of the Convention and of the intervention of the British Consuls is that, in deference to British humanity, we demand that British officials or those they delegate shall be responsible for seeing that the men engaged are acquainted with the terms of the indenture, and are not in other ways to be ill-treated or deceived. Therefore, all that your boasted refusal to give diplomatic assistance will do is to deprive these unfortunate Chinamen of the protection of the Convention. I have heard it said—I do not believe there is any truth in it—on behalf of those who hold the views entertained on the other side of the House that the officials of the Chinese Government are corrupt, and that you can get as many Chinese as you like, not only as indentured labourers but even as actual slaves, if only you bribe the Chinese officials enough. If the intervention of the British Consuls is removed, it is to that that you are coming as an improvement on the present state of things of which you complain. I hope I have made that point clear. I repeat that as long as the Transvaal Government is in favour of indentured labour your proposed interference in China will not be worth the breath with which you will have spoken. I come now to another point. You have a weapon which you threaten to use and which you have used. I share all the strong feeling of the leader of the Opposition, and I share it with perhaps more experience than my right hon. friend in regard to the influence of these proceedings and discussions upon our Colonies. It is perfectly true that in Canada, Australia, and New Zealand there is the strongest feeling—a feeling quite as strong as it is here—against cheap labour. But there is another feeling which is stronger still, and that is against any interference by the home Government with the self-governing Colonies. Nobody but one who has been in the closest communication with almost every authority, every prominent politician and statesman, in those great Colonies can appreciate, as I do, the intensity of that feeling. They would say, "If you interfere when we think you are wrong it is intolerable; but it is not less intolerable when we think you are right. What we object to is the interference. We are self-governing, and you have no more right to interfere with our views, be they right or be they wrong, than you have to interfere with similar views on the part of the United States of America."

MAJOR SEELY: What about coinage? We interfere constantly in matters of coinage.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: The hon. and gallant Gentleman does not know much, I think, about our Colonial Constitution. Of course, I exclude anything in which Imperial interests are concerned.

MAJOR SEELY: Surely slavery is concerned with our Imperial interests.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: Do you think that the question of indentured labour is one which we can rightly put forward as being of Imperial interest? All I can say is, I warn you, and I have the right to warn you solemnly, that if you try to give effect to that idea, if you think that on the ground of Imperial interest you can impose your ideas of morality upon self-governing Colonies, you are very much mistaken. I know there are plenty of people who are always ready to urge that idea, and they are almost invariably on the Liberal side. The

Liberal Party which boasts, entirely without foundation, that they and they alone are the authors of all constitutional freedom in the Colonies, and that to them is due all the affection and patriotism of the Colonies, it is from them that come continual demands on every Colonial Secretary to interfere with the self-government which we have given, the moment the Colony begins to act in any respect to which we take exception, and especially when it is our moral sentiments that are aroused. You may admire the strong sense of humanity which leads to this interference, but you cannot act upon it—it is impossible—and keep your Empire together. I remember, in my time at the Colonial Office, I was asked to take the strongest possible measures by well-intentioned people who complained of the treatment of natives by West Australia. My own belief was then, and is now, that those statements of the ill-treatment of the natives were grossly exaggerated. But, whether they were right or wrong, I refused to pay any attention to them beyond conveying the letters in which the accusations were made to the Governor of the Colony, leaving it to his discretion to communicate them to his Government, but making it perfectly clear that I had no claim whatever to interfere in what was a matter of local interest and local interest alone. I deny altogether that on any ground of Imperial interest, as understood by any constitutional authority, we have or could have any right of interference in the case of West Australia, or, again, in the case of the Transvaal. How far are you going to carry this idea? The other day there was a discussion here on the treatment of the natives in the Transvaal and Orange River Colony. The treatment of these natives, as alleged by certain people, has been worse than anything which has been alleged in regard to the treatment of the Chinese. But here your morality would come in very strongly. The treatment of these natives would also be an Imperial interest. [Cries of "It is."] Yes, it is an Imperial interest as long as you are responsible for it; and no one has ever thought of throwing off such a responsibility as that which under existing circumstances you retain. But is it the spirit of the Party opposite that they are going to give self-government to the Transvaal, and at the same time withhold from them the right, not only to deal with great economic questions, but also to deal with the native population? Let it be known what the Liberal Party mean when they talk of giving self-government to a Colony. There will be a long list of exceptions. I tell you that that will be an absolutely impossible policy. Even the threat of such a policy is the most injudicious and imprudent thing I have ever heard. Even if you contemplated—as I am sure you would do with the greatest regret—the possibility that you might have to interfere, I should have thought that common prudence would have prevented you from saying anything about it until that terrible necessity arose. But here is the Under-Secretary of State speaking for the Government and warning the people of the Transvaal, British and Boer alike, that whenever our morality is offended then an Imperial interest springs into being, and then you are to interfere with the liberities which you have granted. There is to be freedom for the Chinese, but there is to be no freedom for the self-governing Colony.

*MR. RIDSDALE (Brighton) said he might ask the indulgence of the House, rising as he did as a new Member under somewhat exceptional circumstances to disagree to a certain extent with the policy of his own Party. He only did so under the very gravest sense of the responsibility which this House was incurring by the action which he believed was contemplated. The first speech that was made by the Under-Secretary for the Colonies was one which he, and he believed every Member on the Ministerial side, welcomed. It promised the settlement of all questions in South Africa by the responsible government of the Transvaal which was to be given at the earliest possible moment. That had his full support, and had the full support, he believed, of every Member in the House; but he was sorry to say that step by step the Government seemed to have been forced further and further in a direction which he personally believed to be a direction of the greatest danger. He looked on it with the greatest possible misgiving that this country should in any way thwart or hold out expectations of thwarting any act that might be entered into by a self-governing Colony of British subjects. He said "any act" because he could not conceive of any act of any of our Colonies that would not be as moral as any act of the Imperial Government. There was much talk about slavery; but the people of the Transvaal, who had the thing at their doors, were the best judges of whether the condition of the Chinese labourers was slavery or not. They were the people to judge the conditions. Surely as Liberals they ought to leave the question of a settlement of a problem like this to those who were the best judges of what was really taking place. He had as much objection to Chinese labour as any hon. Member sitting on the Ministerial side of the House, and had he been a Member of the last House of Commons he should have opposed its introduction into South Africa tooth and nail; but as Chinese labour was there, and the prosperity of the Transvaal had been built upon it, although he agreed that it was built upon an insecure and unsound foundation, he was not going to upset that prosperity by pulling away its props suddenly. [MINISTERIAL cries of, "No, no."] It certainly seemed to him as if those props were going to be withdrawn suddenly, but even if they were to be withdrawn gradually, that should be decided upon not by those who had not the information to know whether those timbers should be taken out, or how fast they should go, but it should be left to the decision of that Transvaal assembly which must be the best judge of what was best for its own country. And then there was a more sordid point, that was the money point.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: Yes, a Stock Exchange point.

*MR. RIDSDALE: It should not be forgotten that the Transvaal depended practically entirely upon the gold mines, and if they stopped the working of those mines they would check the prosperity of the Transvaal. Stop the outflow of gold from South Africa, and they would have a rather serious state of things in the City of London. It was certain that the stoppage of this Chinese labour, whether sudden or not, would have the effect of checking that outflow of gold. But whichever way the Transvaal might decide, this country ought not in any way to interfere with them. The Government had had no mandate with regard to Chinese labour. [MINISTERIAL cries of "Yes."] Well, he was surprised if hon. Members thought they had a mandate from the country to stop Chinese labour in South Africa that yesterday they should have gone into the lobby and declared that the sole issue or the main issue at the last election was free trade. He would not occupy the time of the House further, but he thought it was time that it should be known amongst the Liberal leaders that there was a strong feeling that in this matter the Government were going too far. There was a feeling that the best way of settling this matter was to leave it to the Transvaal people who knew most about it. He asked that the question should be left to the people of the Transvaal, whose views of slavery were no worse than ours, and who, whatever hon. Members might say, were not people to be bought. [Cries of "Oh! oh!"] Well, he had never tried to buy one at any rate, and he did not think those who did try would find it a very easy task. He urged the Government to treat this matter as one to be left to the Transvaal and to the Transvaal alone. He thought it was a very serious thing that this Imperial Government should threaten to place a veto upon any settlement which a Colony, after due consideration, might have determined to adopt.

*MR. WALSH (Lancashire, Ince) said he spoke with some diffidence on this matter, because he had listened with considerable satisfaction to the very lucid and he believed very sincere statement which had been presented to the House by the Under-Secretary for the Colonies. He found himself in most active opposition to the hon. Gentleman who had just sat down in saying that he believed the Government was going too quickly upon this matter. He would invite the House to consider the length of time it would take for the Government to develop its policy and bring about what might be described as its effective operation. The House had not been given the slightest hint or indication that any of the conditions under which the licences at present in operation, or the 16,000 licences issued in November and December last, were granted were to be at all abrogated. He would remind the House that not the slightest suggestion had been made by the Government that the existing Ordinance, or any of its conditions, was to be in any way abrogated until responsible Government had been conferred upon the Transvaal people themselves; and only after that particular Government had considered the requirements of the case would the possible right to veto be exercised. With regard to the undue haste of which the hon. Member opposite was afraid, he wished to point out that the first Chinaman set foot in the Transvaal in June 1904 to work under indentured labour. It might be therefore taken that to the end of the year 1905 there had elasped from the first to the last licence, eighteen months, giving an average of nine months for the general body of licences issued up to December last. So that, speaking broadly, there were on those licenses from 1904 to December 1905 in the first portion a term of twenty-seven months yet to run. The Ordinance further permitted re-indenturing, so that the men in the first batch of licences issued to December, 1905, had on an average from December, 1905, two years and three months to serve, and they might also serve a further period of three years. He did not think that was very great haste; at any rate it was what the Scotch would call making haste slowly. But supposing the men working under the present licences were permitted to re-indenture, then the Liberal Government, of whom the highest possible hopes were entertained, would find the first batch of licences still in operation when they were making a second appeal to the country. He had heard of many people in English history appearing in white sheets before their accusers or judges, but with every regard to the record of the Liberal Party of the past, and with every desire that they should set a better record in the future, he appealed to the Government to quicken their pace on this subject. It was said by the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies that by June or July this year the whole of the coolies under the 16,000 licenses issued in November and December last would be shipped. He was not prepared to challenge that statement, but Lord Selborne had stated that those licenses would take up to September next to ship, and that a boat-load might be calculated as consisting of about 1,900 men. There were 16,119 licences issued, and that would certainly take very nearly nine months to ship. The last boat-load of men would probably be arriving in the Transvaal at the end of the present year. Their licences would enable them to work three years, so that even without reindenturing three years from the end of this year would elapse before those licences had a possibility of expiring. He submitted that that was a most serious matter. He was one of those who placed before his constituency in Lancashire day by day, and week by week, the depth to which this nation had descended by introducing Chinese labour at all into the mines of the Rand. Consequently he had nothing to withdraw, and he distinctly stated that this was one of those matters that deserved the severest condemnation. It was the kind of conduct which, greatly as they loved this Empire, would bring it to ruin if they disregarded human elementary rights. Although he believed that the Liberal Government was sincere and desired to bring Chinese labour to an end as quickly as was consistent with a minimum of economic disturbance, yet he believed that they had not accurately gauged the feeling of the country or the moral reprobation with which the people regarded this matter. With regard to the issue of 16,000 licences in November and December last, there was not one single word in the Blue-books or despatches from the Lord High Commissioner which justified the issue of those licences. He had spoken of the continuous expansion of the industry, but in the month immediately preceding the High Commissioner's despatch the industry had fallen, and there was a lesser output of gold from the mines than the average for the preceding six months. These licences were in no way justified. It might be said that that continuity of policy which was necessary in high State matters rendered it essential that these licences should go on. He did not believe that continuity of policy ought to be exercised in defiance of moral law considerations. These licences were issued in defiance of moral considerations. The Under-Secretary for the Colonies had spoken of intelligent anticipation. He and his friends did not think "intelligent anticipation" should be exercised by a gentleman occupying the position of Lord High Commissioner or by those acting under him. Its exercise up to now had been limited to successful journalists. He believed that the public had been deceived in this matter and that the Government too had been deceived, and they ought to exercise their right of suspending if not of abrogating all the licences issued in November and December last. Because, after all, what did it mean? He could speak for every man on the Benches around him at least, and he hoped he could speak for those on the other side of the House. It meant the moral degradation of labour the world over. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham, with some part of whose appeal at least they were in agreement, had spoken of the futility and of the very grave danger involved in interfering with the Colonies' right of self-government. But, after all, the right of the British Empire to secure justice and equity and fair play overrode every right that the Empire conceded to the Colonies. They were the subjects of this State, and as such in moments of danger and distress they were entitled to demand and receive the assistance of Parliament. The Answer given to a Question by the Under-Secretary for the Colonies a few days ago was that the Government "did not view with pleasure" the issue of the licences to which he had referred. Well, if the issue of those licences was immoral—as he submitted it was—if it was not founded on equity, it was a mere legal fiction, because they were at present in a state of suspense. Thousands and thousands of them—probably 12,000 out of the 16,000 sanctioned in November and December last—had not yet been granted at all. That legal fiction was unworthy of the consideration of the Government, and those licences should be suspended, if not entirely abrogated, until a full and complete and unfettered inquiry had been made into the conditions under which they were granted. He believed most earnestly that the High Commissioner had not acted in that faithful and open manner to that House and the nation in which he ought to have acted. An hon. Gentleman who had recently spoken in the debate referred to the prosperity of the Transvaal. Had he read anything during the last eighteen months or two years—or even for the last three or four months—about the condition of life in the Transvaal, as described in the Board of Trade Gazette? Was he aware of the thousands and thousands of white people—many of them British subjects—who were tramping the streets of Johannesburg, depending upon soup kitchens and relief works? Was that the prosperity which the hon. Gentleman desired to maintain? Why, it was the experience of all the past, and undoubtedly it was the opinion of every economist and every employer who had given that matter serious consideration, that degraded labour was the worst possible form of labour. He was quite sure that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham in his heart knew that that degraded labour was not a form of labour upon which a self-governing colony worthy of the name could at all be founded. This was a system which had disgraced the British name—which had laden us with reproach—and he most earnestly appealed to the Leader of the House to take stronger action in the matter. They asked the Government to consider less the investors and the mining speculators. Let them think of the thousands of people who were out of work and who would have found both work and better wages had this condition of labour not been introduced. In a word, he submitted that this matter was one of the highest moral consequence. It was not a question of playing off one Party against the other. In controversial matters most of them were inclined to say, "A plague on both your Houses." But in matters which went down right to the very bed-rock of the Empire—matters which really touched their hearts and their existence—they did most earnestly appeal to the Government. There was no right to compensation if no right was taken away. What did those men suffer who had never been given the power of using the labour of other people? The line of boldness in this matter was the true and honest line, and it was the most moral line. They ought to go outside the finnicking interpretation of the law given by the Attorney-General of the Transvaal. If the Government did not do what was expected of them in this matter they would find thousands of white people roaming the streets, while large hordes of Asiatics were introduced under conditions repellant to white men. Therefore he hoped that the Government would take a bolder action and thus place themselves more in sympathy and touch with the feelings of the nation.

MR. MARKHAM (Nottinghamshire, Mansfield) said the last speaker had dealt at considerable length with the question whether Chinese labour was right or wrong. Might he be allowed to ask the hon. Member this question? Supposing the Chinese came to South Africa free, would he say it was the duty of this House to prevent the introduction into South Africa of Chinese labour or not? [Several MEMBERS: "Agreed, agreed."] Members around him said "agreed," but he thought that Gentlemen on the opposite Benches would not agree. [A LABOUR MEMBER: Certainly not.] Therefore they were now to understand, so far as the Labour Members of the House were concerned, that the position with regard to Chinese labour stood in this way. Even if the people of South Africa through their elected representatives said that Chinese labour was in their opinion necessary to develop the resources of the Transvaal, if Chinese labour came there on conditions which were not repugnant, His Majesty's Government should prevent it. [Cries of "No."] He was perfectly willing to take the conditions existing in British Guiana. Was he to understand that if Chinese labour came into the Transvaal free no section in this House was opposed to its introduction provided the people of the Transvaal were in favour of it? [Cries of "No."] Then what was free labour? In 1900 he wrote an article in the *Nineteenth Century* in which he pointed out that there was not a sufficiency of Kaffir labour in South Africa and that the mines could only be worked by introducing outside labour. The late Sir William Harcourt dealt with that article at considerable length in this House and stated that there was an abundant supply of labour to be had in South Africa. All the evidence went to prove that there was not a sufficiency of labour in South Africa. That was a debateable point. In his opinion as a mining engineer it was not possible to work the Transvaal mines with white labour. [A LABOUR MEMBER: What about Australia?] An hon. Member said, "What about Western Australia?" He had been on every goldfield of the world. He knew the West Australian mines and the American mines, and he did not hold a single gold-mining share, nor had he held a mining share in South African mines since he had been a Member of the House. But what were the conditions in Western Australia? The average yield of gold per ton of ore milled was 76s. per ton, but the average yield in the Transvaal, according to the last Return, was 35s. 5d. per ton The great feature of the Transvaal gold mines was the regularity of the reefs; in this respect they were different from the goldfields of Australia and all other parts of the world. Before the discovery of gold the revenue of the Transvaal was £50,000 a year, and when the Uitlanders were groaning under the burden of Mr. Kruger's Government the debt of the Transvaal under that terrible *régime* amounted to £12,000,000. What was the position to-day? The debt of the Transvaal, including municipal and Colonial debt, was now £40,000,000 and the expenditure for administration was £3,800,000, or £1,500,000 more than under Mr. Kruger. Now, from what other source than the mining industry could the Government of the Transvaal derive revenue to meet their obligations?

MR. FLAVIN (Kerry, N.): Will the hon. Member say whether the Boers live by mining or as farmers?

MR. MARKHAM said that where a Boer could live a British subject could not. [Cries of "Oh" from the LABOUR Benches.] How many Britishers were engaged in the Transvaal in agriculture? [An HON. MEMBER: A large number.] A very small number. He was not now talking of the Orange River Colony but of the Transvaal. There were drought, locusts, and other drawbacks to agriculture, and the result of placing British subjects on the soil would be that, in six months, they would be sitting on the steps of the mining magnates in Johannesburg asking for mining tips. The Transvaal was not a country where British subjects ever would settle. They would never create a British population on the soil there, and it was from the mining industry that they would have to look for the revenue to carry on the administration of the country. The question he desired to ask the Under-Secretary for the Colonies was whether those mines could be worked with a larger proportion of unskilled white labour than at present? The question as to whether these mines could be worked entirely with white unskilled labour was one that no mining engineer had ever put forward. Certainly the great majority of electors in this country were of opinion that it was possible to work these mines with white labour, and they pointed to the high dividends paid by the mines in the Transvaal, which amounted, in some cases, to 280 to 300 per cent. on the shares. No one said that the mines in the Transvaal could be worked by white labour alone—not even Mr. Cresswell. [Loud interruptions from the LABOUR Benches.]

*MR. SPEAKER: I would point out that it is really impossible to continue the debate if hon. Gentlemen insist on these interruptions.

MR. MARKHAM said that his point had been disputed, but Mr. Cresswell had admitted that in the Village Main Reef Mine only one white man was employed for every three Kaffirs. A large number of people in the Transvaal, and certainly a majority of the people in this country, believed that it was possible to work these mines in South Africa by means of white labour. There were twenty rich mines in the Transvaal which might be worked by white labour, but it should be remembered that, taking rich and poor mines, the average yield was 35s. per ton of ore. He proposed that the Government should send out a Commission to South Africa to inquire into this whole question as to whether the mines could be worked by white labour, and suggested such gentlemen as the hon. Member for the Wansbeck Division, Mr. Stokes, His Majesty's Inspector of Mines in the Midland district, some gentlemen nominated by the Mining Association of Great Britain, and two gentlemen from the Board of Trade as members of such a Commission. An inquiry by such a Commission would be of immense benefit to this House and primarily to the people of the Transvaal. At present the people in the Transvaal itself had not the opportunity of forming an independent judgment as to whether the mines could be worked by white labour. Investigation should also be made into the terrible rate of mortality among the Kaffir labourers It was because of this awful death-rate that in 1897 he approached the late Mr. Kruger and asked him to introduce Chinese labour into South Africa. He had been in Portuguese East Africa and had seen the conditions under which the Kaffirs were recruited there for the gold mines. In that territory the chiefs had the power of life and death over the natives; they could farm them out and do what they liked with them. These Kaffirs, who had probably never worn any article of clothing, were taken from their tropical country on to the high veldt, and the result was pneumonia and an appalling mortality. Besides, these Kaffirs did not go to the mines as free men, but as forced labourers. The cause of the high mortality was the bringing of Kaffirs from tropical and sub-tropical Africa upon the high veldt, as in that region they suffered from chest and lung disorders. He hoped the Under-Secretary would give his serious and earnest consideration to this terrible mortality. Rather than allow it to continue it was the duty of His Majesty's Government to suffer the mining industry of South Africa to perish. For himself he would rather see that industry perish than thousands of these unfortunate Kaffirs being done to death in the Transvaal. They were in most cases forced to go to the Transvaal against their will, whereas the Chinese went there of their own free will. The mortality among the Chinese, moreover, was only one-sixth of that which prevailed amongst the Kaffirs. He believed that until a class of labour was introduced upon the high veldt which was able to face the climatic conditions prevailing at 6,000 feet above the level of the sea, this mortality would continue. Therefore, so long as labour was brought from tropical and sub-tropical Africa, the decimation of Kaffirs would continue. The only alternatives were unskilled white labour or Chinese labour. As to the first, he held that it was impossible to work these mines with unskilled white labour. He had held these views for ten years, and if he was accused of countenancing the introduction of Chinese native labour into South Africa, he would plead guilty. This, however, was a question for the people of South Africa to decide, and if the people of that country said that Chinese labour was essential to the development of South Africa—and he believed that the people would say that by an overwhelming majority—they were entitled to do so.

His Majesty's Government were endeavouring, and justly endeavouring, to see that any condition which they found in the Ordinance, which might partake of the character of slavery, was amended. What those conditions of slavery were he did not know. The only difference between the British Guiana Ordinance and the Transvaal Ordinance seemed to him to be that under the latter the labourer was not entitled to settle in the country after he had served his indenture, and he was prevented from undertaking any work except that of the unskilled labourer. But these were matters for the Colony, and if they were going to give self-government to the people of a Colony 6,000 miles away, they must trust the people absolutely. They could not discriminate; it was impossible to do so. If the Government thought they could not trust these people they must not give them self-government. They could not have it both ways. If the Transvaal was ripe for self-government then it must be full self-government; it must not be within the power of the House to say that in the opinion of some of its Members the policy of the Colony was incompatible with the views of the English nation. His Majesty's Government were prepared to grant self-government, and he hoped it would be granted at the earliest possible period; and when they had given to Transvaal that self-government they had no more right to enforce their views upon the Transvaal than upon any other colony. He was in Australia at the time of the Chinese labour trouble several years ago—he thought it was in 1889—when certain Chinese asserted the right to land at Sydney. What was the position? In spite of the declarations of His Majesty's Government the Colonial Government refused to allow these Chinese to come in to Australia. He did not think he was disclosing any secrets when he said that the Ministers of Australia said at that time that if the policy was insisted upon the Colony would cut the cord which bound them to the Empire. The action was repeated on another occasion when His Majesty's Government attempted to tell a self-governing Colony what it should do. To say that the mining magnates were going to treat 250,000 electors in South Africa as nothing was absurd. They could not do it. They did it in former days on a very wide scale, as was shown by evidence which was complete, but to say that 150,000 of our fellow countrymen could be so treated under present conditions was an insult. What was the position of the Boer? He had said in that House several times that we had lost South Africa. He said it again. There was a portion of the British population in the Transvaal which was discontented, and would be discontented with the capitalist domination which had been going on since the occupation of Pretoria. The Boers were united on the question of nationality. A Legislature might make laws, but when once they struck at the nationality of a people they could not stifle it. If there was a dissatisfied Uitlander population they would make terms with the other side, and the time would come when the tie of affection, which was the only tie between Great Britain and her colonies, would be severed. The moment His Majesty's Government started to interfere with the rights of her self-governing Colonies the whole representative power of those Colonies would be opposed to her. Since Chinese labour had been introduced there had been an increase of 6,000 white men working in the mines in the Transvaal, and the average wage of these men, according to the mining engineer's report which had been presented to the House, was £1 a day, which was the highest wage paid in any part of the world to-day to any British workmen. Mr. Cresswell, before the Commission, said he paid 10s. a day but that that was not sufficient to enable the workmen to bring their wives and families out and support them. Mr. Cresswell said that the wage which unskilled labour received did not allow a man to bring his wife and family to South Africa. Was it not better to have 6,000 men who were, owing to a wage of £1 a day, able to have their wives and families with them, than to have a larger number of unskilled white labourers who could not settle in the country. Mr. Cresswell was the only mining engineer who said that these mines could be worked not entirely with white labour, but with a large proportion of white labour. It was the duty of His Majesty's Government who had been returned to the House because their supporters thought that these mines could be supported by white labour to inquire and report to the House whether that was the case. He appealed to the hon. Gentleman the Under-Secretary to send this Commission to South Africa so that this matter might be considered in all its phases. If it was found that the mines could be worked by white labour he would be one of the first to admit that he was wrong, and if an impartial Commission composed of impartial mining men were to say that such a thing was in their opinion possible, then it would be the duty of the House to give every possible support to any movement which would bring a larger white population into the Transvaal. Lord Elgin had not made up his mind whether it was possible to work the mines with white labour or not. Mr. Cresswell and many others believed that it was, and therefore it was only right that the Commission should be appointed, and that their report on the whole subject should be laid upon the Table of the House so that the country might know the truth. He also asked the Government to say whether it was humane that natives recruited in subtropical Africa should be allowed to work in the mines. The Government had nothing to fear; so long as the country had the truth it would be satisfied, and he was certain that all those who conscientiously believed that these mines could be worked by white labour would be the first to welcome a Commission which would enable this country to have true information on the subject. It was not yet too late to do so before the grant of responsible self-government. The result of appointing a Commission would be that confidence would be restored in South Africa, because the people would feel that the Government had placed the interest of the country before the question of Party.

*SIR W. EVANS GORDON (Tower Hamlets, Stepney) said he rose to call attention to the drastic and fundamental changes which had been introduced by the Home Secretary with regard to the Aliens Act, and to express his amazement that such changes as the right hon. Gentleman had foreshadowed should have been hastily made by the issue of regulations without this House having been given any opportunity of pronouncing upon them. The changes the right hon. Gentleman had made amounted in fact to a repeal of the main provisions of an Act of Parliament which had not yet been three months in operation, and which was passed by an overwhelming majority of the last Parliament. The Aliens Act laid down certain categories of persons to be excluded from this country as undesirable immigrants. The effect of Clause 1, Sub-Section 3, was to lay the whole proof upon the immigrant that he was seeking this country as a refuge from religious or political persecution, but under the new rules and regulations the position had been changed, and, he maintained, the whole spirit of the Act completely altered. The instruction or the essential part of it which had been issued was in the following terms—

> "I have issued to all immigration officers instructions that, in all cases in which immigrants coming from the parts of the continent which are at present in a disturbed condition allege that they are flying from religious or political persecution, the benefit of the doubt where any doubt as to the truth of the allegation exists must be allowed and leave to land must be given."

The onus of proof had thereby been removed entirely from the immigrant, and everyone must now be admitted on his bare, uncorroborated, and untested statement that he was suffering in the manner described. It must be obvious that the whole Act became null and void under those conditions. Persons in the categories excluded by the Act must now be admitted as a right upon their making this statement. The right hon. Gentleman had further raised the limit of the number constituting an immigrant ship from twelve to twenty. By doing that he further watered down the provisions of the Act, because it was notorious that the present limitation of twelve as the number which constituted an immigrant ship had been freely used for the purposes of evading the law. It amounted to this, that by this regulation any person could come in from any country however undesirable he or she might be, without question, and, so far as Russia was concerned, the principle was laid down that they were to be admitted on their own statement that they came from a disturbed country. It was therefore announced to the world that any country which chose to misgovern its subjects could thereby export them to England and that we could not protest against it. His first point was, had the Secretary of State a legal constitutional right to alter the provisions of an Act of Parliament by means of regulations and instructions, while he still pretended that the Act remained in force? In his judgment the Secretary of State had stretched his powers beyond all precedent. Here was an Act of Parliament only in operation a few months based on the findings of a Royal Commission after a long and exhaustive inquiry, repealed by a subterfuge, while a pretence was maintained that it was still in force. Why had this been done? Had the Act broken down? Had any allegation been proved to justify this extreme, hasty, almost indecent, and certainly unprecedented, course? What were the allegations? The hon. Member for Woolwich, who represented a certain school of thought in this matter, regarded the Act as a fraud and a sham. How could that possibly be proved with regard to an Act which had been in force for so short a time? If it really were a fraud and a sham, then that would be a ground for courageous repeal of the measure, and not an insidious step of the kind taken by the Secretary of State for the Home Department. With regard to the value of the Act and its administration they had not to look at the ports of arrival in this country, but to the ports of embarkation. He had been at some pains to find out whether the deterrent effect they anticipated from enforcing the provisions of the Act had in fact resulted at the ports of embarkation, and he found that before these instructions were issued emigrants to this country were being weeded out and selected by the shippers and agents interested in this business in precisely the same manner as they were weeded out and selected for America. Firm administration in this country for, say, a period of a year at most would have resulted in as beneficial an effect for this country as was at the present day enjoyed by America. Under the instructions issued by the Secretary of State for the Home Department all this was now to be thrown away. So much for the first allegation as to the uselessness of the Act. The second allegation was that the administration of the Act had been harsh, cruel, and unjust. What was the source and foundation of these allegations? The source was tainted, the foundation was prejudice and the methods adopted grossly unfair. That section of the Press which had dealt daily with columns of bogus atrocities had themselves complained that they had not been admitted to the Boards where these cases were inquired into and tried. To whom then did they go for their information? They went to the rejected immigrant himself or to some person interested in his importation, and then they dished up as facts, stories given to them by these people, and served them up to a hysterical public in order to prejudice feeling against this Act. The principal charm of these stories was, of course, that they reflected upon the good name, the humanity, the justice, and the honour of gentlemen who sat upon these Boards, and whom the Secretary of State had himself described as men of intelligence and character. When these alleged cases of hardship came to be examined in this House, what did they find? The Secretary of State for the Home Department had told the House that a good deal of inventiveness was being exercised with regard to these stories, and that already there had been a number of cases which apparently had been of great hardship, but in many of which there had been no corroboration. It was on a basis of this kind that the Secretary of State introduced these changes. The right hon. Gentleman further said that any reasonable probability of a claim to persecution being genuine sufficed to admit an immigrant. If that were so what possible case had been made out for altering the Act? The Secretary of State had himself in this House blown to pieces the very allegations upon which these changes were now announced. There was another source of information as to the way in which the Act was administered. The *Manchester Guardian*, a newspaper which was certainly not prejudiced in the direction of being too favourable to the Aliens Act, had recently published the result of independent inquiry, made on its behalf in London and Grimsby. In regard to London it appeared—

> "That the Act had been administered in a liberal spirit,"

and that if a man stated that he came from any of the disturbed districts it was accepted as ample ground for the immigrant's being admitted. With regard to Grimsby, the *Manchester Guardian* reporter stated that—

> "A review of the two months' test of the working of the Aliens Act at Grimsby seems to show that at this port the various officials have administered the Act with tact and discretion, and in a broad-minded spirit. The examination of the immigrants appears to have been conducted in an expeditious and considerate manner. The shipping companies have shown willingness to meet the wishes of the immigration officers, and no friction has occurred."

Most contradictory arguments were used against the Act. In one breath they were told that it was a farce and a sham, and in the next that the refugees were being delivered over to their tormentors in scores, and that the country was being closed to the poor and deserving. Hon. Gentlemen could not have it both ways. Capital had, moreover, been made out of charges of alleged hardship arising from rejection of diseased persons. On Monday last one such case was mentioned in this House. It related to a consumptive patient who was not allowed to land and was detained on board the ship. He yielded to no one in his sympathy with this poor creature. At the same time he would remind the House that consumption was now proved to be a highly contagious disease, easily communicated, especially where people were living under crowded conditions. They should, therefore, have some thought of the suffering that would be almost inevitably produced if they allowed people with this disease to come into the crowded quarters of our cities and towns. The same argument applied to the case of a girl named Chane Slutsky, who was rejected as suffering from trachoma, which was highly contagious, frequently led to blindness, and was the third chief cause of total loss of sight. Praiseworthy sentiment might admit the child, but how would that sentiment protect our own children against the infection of so serious a disease? It was our bounden duty to keep out diseases of that kind. Steps had been taken to protect the cattle of this country from infection from abroad, and was it reasonable when such a disease as miners' worm was imported to raise an outcry against sending immigrants back who were suffering from that and other dangerous diseases? The question was one of principle. Either they had to admit diseased persons or to reject them. If they admitted one, they must admit all. It should be remembered that the responsibility in connection with the bringing of aliens in that condition rested with the shipping people who brought them. If those entrusted with the administration of the Act maintained their position firmly with regard to diseased persons, in a very short time no such cases would be sent to this country. He submitted that no case whatever had been or could be made out for changes which he thought were of doubtful legality and were tantamount to the total repeal of the Aliens Act. What was the reason for taking this course? He found it in the characteristic want of courage of His Majesty's Ministers. They expressed determination one day to administer the Act firmly, and a day or two afterwards the Secretary of State turned round and ran away from his responsibility. Of course, they all knew that it was very inconvenient for the right hon. Gentleman to be worried with Questions from his own side. Therefore, he was going to get rid of such criticism by a bag-and-baggage surrender. The House had become painfully familiar with this humiliating spectacle. An hon. Gentleman belonging to the Liberal Party below the gangway said "Boo," and then the great fabric of the Government began to tremble, and they saw Ministers running about like scared rabbits in a warren. This indecent surrender which they had witnessed in the Regulations just issued would have very serious and painful consequences. All the bitter discontent that existed in the East End of London and in the other great cities would be revived. All the complaints would be renewed. Since the Act came into force considerable improvement—or some improvement at all events—had been experienced in the state of things. [Cries of "Oh!"] That was perfectly true. He knew that hon. Gentlemen opposite said, and it had been said in the Press, that he was the originator of the discontent. Nothing could be further from the fact. He found the East End of London seething with discontent and deplorable bitterness of feeling on this subject. It was only after two or three years careful inquiry that he ventured to give expression to these strong feelings on behalf of the people he represented. It was said, too, that in advocating the strong administration of this Act and upholding its provisions he was inhumane or actuated by feelings of an anti-Semitic character. He repudiated the statements which were constantly made against himself with absolute scorn. If charges of anti-Semitism were made let them be levelled against the great Jewish financial houses on the Continent, who were making huge loans to the Russian Government. That money went to uphold and perpetuate the very tyranny of which Jews complained, and under which they suffered so severely. He might be called an anti-Semite, but he would sooner starve than lend money to a Government who were the oppressors and persecutors of his own people. Hon. Gentlemen opposite might say that the Act was a sham. That would not do. They had not tried the Act, and they were not giving it a chance. They were yielding to the first puff of opposition and to ignorant and prejudiced clamour. For what might occur as the result of these illegal changes the Government, and the Government alone, would be responsible.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. GLADSTONE, Leeds, W.): I think I heard the hon. Gentleman say that I and my colleagues ran away, and that I had been conspicuously active in running away. I do not think the hon. Member ought to talk about "running away" in this House. If there has been any running away it is perhaps owing to the infectious example of the hon. Gentleman and his friends, who in the last Parliament so frequently ran away. Time after time my hon. and gallant friend opposite was conspicuous by his absence when a subject in which he took great interest was before the House in the last Parliament.

SIR HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central): No; I was always present.

*MR. GLADSTONE: I apologise if that was so. Will he pretend to say that he voted and that he spoke?

SIR HOWARD VINCENT: Yes; I made long speeches.

*MR. GLADSTONE: It is perfectly clear that the hon. Gentleman and his friends ran away over and over again, and therefore I think I may protest against this charge by the hon. Member. The hon. Member who has just spoken has failed to show that his charges against me of making drastic and fundamental changes and of practically repealing the Act are true. He has not quoted a single sentence in support of the statement that the immigration boards have been held up to scorn and reprobation. I repudiate that.

SIR W. EVANS GORDON: I have not attacked the right hon. Gentleman on that point.

*MR. GLADSTONE: The hon. Member has not explained his charges to the House, nor has he shown how the charges are true in any degree. He has been attacking me all through his speech. The immigration boards have been doing their duty extremely well and I should be the last man to put any extra difficulty in the way of their accomplishment of their task. I have not heard any charges such as those indicated by the hon. Member made against the boards. I have heard many charges made against the Act they have to administer; but that is an entirely different thing from personal charges against those administering the Act. The hon. Member spoke as if what I have done meant that every diseased and dangerous person could be brought into this country under the Act. I think the shortest way to answer the hon. Member will be to tell the House what I really have done, for the hon. Member seems to have gone wild under the idea that I have in some hidden, sinister, and illegal way abrogated the provisions of the Act. I have had particularly in my mind in what I have done individual cases of hardship. I have told the House that I thought it was my duty to administer the Act fairly and that I would do so. I am not responsible for the passing of the Act. I found it when I came into office. This does not relieve me from the obligation to watch over its administration, especially where in my opinion that administration led to cases of individual hardship which were severe even though they were not very numerous. What is my offence? In a covering letter sent with my circular to the immigration boards, dated March 9th, the Under-Secretary asks that the contents should be borne in mind when cases are being dealt with; and in the circular letter itself I express my opinion that it is desirable to set forth certain considerations of great importance in the administration of the Act. Then I proceed to say—

"The Act was passed for the purpose of checking the immigration of undesirable aliens. Parliament, in the judgment of the Secretary of State, never intended that in the administration for that object of the provisions of the Act they should be applied with a rigidity which excludes considerations as to whether refusal of leave to land would involve great personal hardship or suffering in the case of women and children."

Does the hon. Gentleman dispute the justice of that? Does he, or does he not?

SIR W. EVANS GORDON: The particular questions which have been raised with regard to women and children are questions as to disease. I would not admit cases of serious disease.

*MR. GLADSTONE: However distressing the cases were, the hon. Gentleman would send a woman or child back because she was ill and separated from her friends. The hon. Member would wish to see this Act put into force and administered with a degree of rigidity which took no account whatever of the greatest hardship that might be inflicted on women and children. If that is the hon. Member's view, it is not my view. I proceeded—

"So, too, a man who is free from any infectious or objectionable disease"

The hon. Member does not seem to have marked these words:—

"may be in a critical state of health, and to refuse him leave to land might expose him to cruel hardship."

Does the hon. Member still think there is no latitude to be shown in the administration of the Act in such a case? The next point is one on which the hon. Member would have a greater right to criticise the letter from his point of view—

"Again, the statements of a man claiming to be a political, or a religious, refugee may be insufficient or inaccurate, yet he may be exposed to serious risk from political causes if he is forced to return."

That is true. We know perfectly well by experience that these immigrants coming from some parts of Russia, absolutely ignorant of the English language, are told by their friends what to say, and that stories are put into their mouths; but this is not necessarily done because they are not fleeing from danger. That is the point. In my judgment an inaccuracy of statement on the part of one of these ignorant men should not necessarily be taken as a cause for exclusion. Then my letter goes on to express a hope—I have no power to do more than that—

> "That, having regard to the present disturbed conditions of certain parts of the Continent, the benefit of the doubt, where any doubt exists, may be given in favour of any immigrants who allege that they are flying from religious or political persecution in disturbed districts, and that in such cases leave to land may be given."

The hon. and gallant Member has referred to a statement in the *Manchester Guardian* that certain disturbed districts are scheduled, and when a man said he came from one of these districts that was considered sufficient to justify leave to land. The hon. and gallant Member to my great surprise approved of that. If he approves of that I think he may as well approve of the whole of my circular.

SIR W. EVANS GORDON: I quoted that to show that the Act was not harshly administered.

*MR. GLADSTONE: Then I do not quite understand why approval is not extended to the suggestion in my letter. I have the authority of the Leader of the Opposition on my side, who, in the course of discussion, on July 17th said—

> "There was no difference of opinion in the House as to the desirability of admitting aliens into this country who were genuinely driven out of their own country on the grounds of their being accused of political crime or involved in political agitation."

Then on July 19th the right hon. Gentleman went rather further, and said—

> "We have heard a great deal of the possibility of Jews and others coming to this country in an absolutely destitute condition and being rejected under this Bill from our shores, although they were flying from religious or political persecution. Nobody desires that such a contingency should occur."

That is my opinion, and it is in order that such a case should not arise that I have addressed my letter to the immigration boards. Even though action taken on that letter may result in the benefit of the doubt being given in some cases where individuals in ordinary circumstances would be rejected, I think English people generally will approve. Perhaps the action which I have taken last week ought to have been taken earlier. The hon. Member says that I have done this without coming to Parliament for sanction. As a matter of fact I have altered only one Order. What is the history of these Orders? They were never presented to Parliament. The whole machinery for carrying the Act into operation was constructed during the autumn and winter, and when I came into office, I found it necessary to give my own signature to these Orders so as to put them into operation. Surely, if that were so, it was within my power, subject to the decision and approval of this House, to alter one of these Orders. We only came into office in December and the rules had to come into force on January 1st. I could not suspend them. I had no authority for that and it would have been most improper action on my part. I could not amend the Orders without consideration, and I had no time to consider them. I signed and accepted them as I accepted the Act which was passed—not on my responsibility. I have done my best to administer the Act fairly, and I tell the hon. and gallant Member that what I have done is, from his point of view, in the interest of the Act, for if I had not done that perhaps something more drastic might have had to be done. The time has not come for any general review of the operation of the Act, and I am not going to be dragged into any attempt to give an opinion on the subject. All I have done is to remedy certain grievances and to prevent great hardships being inflicted. I am confident that the whole country would have resented if I had not done so if it were in my power to do so. I repeat that it has not been my intention to deal unfairly with the working of the Act. I wish to give it a fair trial. If the Act is a bad Act we cannot prove that to the satisfaction of all parties concerned unless we have had experience of its working. I would point out to the hon. and gallant Member that during this session the Department over which I preside has had very important work to discharge in other directions than in the administration of the Aliens Act. I found the whole work of the office was being seriously interfered with by the administration of that Act, and I have been compelled to take action in order, if possible, to mitigate the pressure on the office and to enable the staff to turn their attention to other matters in connection with the present session of Parliament. I have acted from a sentiment which one ought to act on in a matter of this kind. At any rate, I have acted on grounds of reasonable humanity, and for my part I could not feel myself responsible for the continuance of the special hardships which had been inflicted on the men, women, and children who came to our shores, if it was in my power to remedy the evil.

SIR HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central) said he had every confidence in his right hon. friend, but it was with some dismay that he had heard an answer to a Question a few days ago as to very considerable changes which had either been made or were contemplated in the rules in force under the Aliens Act. Obviously it was much too soon to make these changes, and his right hon. friend had not carried out his own intention of giving the rules a fair trial.

*MR. GLADSTONE: The hon. and gallant Gentleman talks about rules and orders which have been altered. I point out that only one out of twenty-five rules has been altered.

SIR HOWARD VINCENT: That was the most important order of all—the instruction to the immigration boards. These instructions were "that in all cases in which immigrants coming from the parts of the Continent which are at present in a disturbed condition allege that they were flying from religious or political persecution, the benefit of the doubt, where any doubt exists, as to the truth of the allegation must be allowed, and leave to land must be given."

*MR. GLADSTONE: Where there is any doubt.

SIR HOWARD VINCENT asked what right had the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State to issue such an imperative notice to the immigration officers? Why did not the right hon. Gentleman rely on the discretion of the immigration officers? He asked his right hon friend distinctly if he would furnish the House of Commons with the Report of the Committee on which these rules were framed? Would not the right hon. Gentleman circulate among Members the rules as originally defined and any proposed alteration in those rules.

*MR. GLADSTONE: I said to-day that the altered rules would be laid.

SIR HOWARD VINCENT: And also the Report of the Committee on which the rules were framed?

*MR. GLADSONE: I will consider that.

SIR HOWARD VINCENT said it was necessary that the House should have before it not only the rules, but also the Report of the Committee. Nobody desired that the Act should be administered with unnecessary harshness. Full latitude should be allowed to the board, and it was not the duty of the Secretary of State to send out these imperative instructions. The Act, which had been in operation for two months, had been working smoothly until quite recently. The people in the East-end of London were deeply interested in the administration of the Act, and any weakness on the part of the Home Office would be resented. No political considerations should be allowed to influence the administration of the Act. The only consideration should be the welfare and interests of our own people. The hon. Member for Accrington complained of the treatment he had received, but an admirable regulation, drawn by the South Eastern and Chatham Railway, was to the effect that the Aliens Act which took effect from the 1st of January 1906 would cause no inconvenience to passengers to and from the Continent holding first class tickets. [A laugh] He did not understand the laugh. Did his hon. friend the Member for Accrington travel steerage or as a deck passenger? The regulation pointed out that the only question which could be asked was whether a passenger was a British subject or not, and the only answer required was "Yes" or "No." He gathered from his hon. friend that he was unable to give that simple answer. If there was any weakness, by the Home Office, in the administration of the Act, deep and serious resentment would be felt.

*MR. LEVY (Leicestershire, Loughborough) hoped the Home Secretary would not be influenced by any pressure put upon him by the other side. The hon. Member for Sheffield said that the Act was working very smoothly, but if hon. Members looked at the papers day after day they would see that the name of Great Britain was suffering serious injustice from the way in which the Act was being administered. The whole evil arose from the fact that the gentleman who, under the late Government, was allowed to frame these rules, had exhibited an anti-Semitic feeling and had shown great bias against the aliens, and was an intimate associate of the hon. Member for Stepney. When the Aliens Bill was under discussion the late Government and their supporters repeatedly asserted that the Bill was not intended to preclude political or religious refugees. He therefore hoped the Home Secretary would see that the Act was administered in a fair and impartial manner, so as not to prevent political and religious refugees from landing in this country. Many of the interpreters who had been employed had not known their duty, and had not correctly interpreted the answers of people who perhaps showed some cunningness, as they dreaded to be returned to their native land. He appealed to the Home Secretary to show magnanimity and humanity in the administration of the Act, and he hoped the right hon. Gentleman would not yield to the pressure which the hon. Member for Central Sheffield, and others, put upon him.

SIR HOWARD VINCENT: No, no.

*MR. LEVY said the hon. Member had tried to put pressure upon the right hon. Gentleman. All that was necessary was to keep out the undesirables. Had the Act by its administration kept out any of the *souteneurs* of the West End of London or the owners of the gambling dens in London? No, and it never could. But, on the other hand, it had resulted in cases of gross injustice. Aliens were being excluded in consequence of the immigration officers claiming that there was no further demand for labour in the trades in which they wished to engage. This was a violation of the Act. New industries had been built up by aliens who had come and settled in this country, and if the administration of this Act refused people who could not show that they had at once a place of employment to go to it would be a very great hardship, and he hoped the Home Secretary would not administer the Act in that spirit. Some of the greatest industries of this country had been introduced into the country and built up by aliens, who did not come here to take employment away but had created employment for the people of this country.

SIR EDWARD CARSON (Dublin University) said he only desired to say a word on this subject, because he was in the House when a Question was put to the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State, and from the cursory examination he was able to give to the Answer he formed the opinion that the right hon. Gentleman was by the powers conferred upon him interfering with a statute passed in the previous session. Having heard the explanation of the right hon. Gentleman, he believed that he (Sir E. Carson) had come to an absolutely erroneous conclusion. He believed the Act was one which required very great discrimination in its administration, and he thought the right hon. Gentleman had not a very easy task in securing a proper and moderate administration of what he believed to be a very important and useful Act, because on every hand if cases of undue hardship occurred under the Act the right hon. Gentleman would no doubt have great influence brought to bear upon him to mitigate those hardships, perhaps even by straining the powers which under the Act were given to him by Parliament. So far as he could see there was no justice in the allegation that the rules and recommendations of the right hon. Gentleman had in any way interfered with the Act of Parliament. He thought that all the criticisms had arisen through the right hon. Gentleman having given instructions to the immigration officers. When he did that he would always be open to criticism. But if they were going to criticise him they ought to see the full extent of what he had done. He had told the officers that in cases in which they were in any doubt as to whether the alien was a political or religious refugee they ought to give him the benefit of the doubt. He (Sir E. Carson) should have thought that was the duty of the immigration officer without any instructions whatever. That was an ordinary rule in the administration of all Acts of Parliament. Therefore, the only matter in which there might be ground for criticism seemed to be taken away if they looked at the thing fairly and honestly, because all the Home Secretary had done was to bring to the minds of the immigration officers a sense of their duty which even without the instructions they no doubt obeyed. He had thought it right to make these observations after listening to the debate, because he would very jealously look upon anything that would interfere with an Act of Parliament. As the right hon. Gentleman was going to give the Act fair play, it was only right that he should have a fair chance.

*Mr. STRAUS (Tower Hamlets, Mile End) said he took the view that it would be a bad day for this country when they closed their doors to the oppressed. One of the noblest characteristics of the Englishman had been his desire to do away with oppression, his love of freedom, and his willingness to open his portals and to welcome all those who were suffering from any form of religious or political persecution. It would be one of the worst day's business ever performed by the House if they refused to amend the Act in such a way as to make it impossible for these refugees to be refused admission. When they spoke of undesirables it was not the poor who were the most undesirable. It was the corrupt monied man who was the greatest danger to the nation, The most undesirable alien lived nearer Park Lane than Stepney. Another class that was undesirable was the prostitute, but this Act did nothing towards remedying that evil. An attack had been made on the Home Secretary for doing what was not only an act of justice but an act which was popular all over the country. The hon. and gallant Member for Stepney suggested that the instructions ought to have been considered by the House before they were given, but was it not the fact that the original instructions in the hands of the immigration officers had never been before the House or considered by any one except the hon. Member's friends when in power? He would mention that during the bye-election in Mile End a Stepney tradesman had placed a large and vulgar cartoon in his shop window depicting an alien, who was meant to be himself, robbing an Englishman of his work and food, and yet this very man was one of the first to be placed upon the Alien Immigration Board. Could one expect him to be unbiassed in his judgment after having shown these vulgar cartoons? He hoped the Act would have a fair trial, but he felt confident that it would prove quite inadequate, and it ought never to have appeared on the Statute Book. It was as absurd as engaging an elephant to kill a flea to have brought in an Act that would cost hundreds of thousands of pounds to prevent a few aliens coming into this country. The Act was one of the many inadequate and incompetent measures typical of the late Government, which disgusted the people and gave the tone to the general election. He was glad to think that the people in East London were not led away by the Act, which they had already realised was a fraud, a delusion, and a snare. He believed the Secretary of State for the Home Department had taken a right and proper course in this matter. He felt strongly on the question. He had suffered from it. He had been told on repeated occasions that he was one of these aliens and could not speak a word of English. The truth of that statement the House could judge for itself. The question had been most unfairly dealt with in the East End of London, and it had taken some of them months of hard work to teach the unfairness of the Act. He did not believe the hon. and gallant Member for Stepney was actuated by any but the most honourable motives, but he was labouring under a misapprehension. This Act ought never to have appeared on the Statute Book, but now it was there they should all do what they could to make it work fairly and leniently towards those who were fleeing from persecution. He believed the majority in this House looked with pleasure upon the action of the Home Secretary, and he felt confident that the country would endorse the feeling of this House. When the hon. and gallant Member for Stepney suggested that they were only keeping out undesirables, what did he think of the poor nine-year old girl who, it was stated, was sent away because she was a deaf mute? That was a mistake. She was sent back because she was certified as being an idiot. In Hamburg she was seen by an eminent authority on the subject, and he found that she was a deaf mute of peculiar and remarkable intelligence, certainly not an idiot. If this enormous machine had been brought to bear upon poor people of that character—one of a family, the others being permitted to enter—it was not a credit either to the hon. and gallant Member for Stepney or the nation.

MAJOR SEELY said in view of the highly satisfactory assurances and the very definite statements made by the Under-Secretary for the Colonies and the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs he would ask leave to withdraw his Amendment.

*MR. MORTON (Sutherland) said he did not venture to question the right of withdrawing the Amendment, but he did desire to say that he had an undertaking from the Government the other night that he should have the opportunity on the Report Stage of bringing forward the question of General Botha. He also desired to bring forward a matter concerning the Scottish Office. He did not, however, wish to delay the Resolution, and he would content himself by saying he would take the very earliest opportunity he could get of bringing these matters forward at another time, when he hoped the Government would endeavour to keep their promise.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Resolution agreed to.

EVENING SITTING.

OLD AGE PENSIONS.

*MR. O'GRADY (Leeds, E.) said the Motion which he had the honour to move this evening dealt with one of the very gravest aspects of the social problem. The House recently passed a Resolution assuring the people of a Bill to provide free food for starving children, and he now asked them to pass a Resolution to give similar assistance to the aged poor when past work. The House would no doubt concede that he and those who sat with him, who in many cases had gravitated from the workshop bench to this House, had some knowledge of this problem with which they had come into close contact throughout their lives. In the days of small employers of labour, when there was a direct contact of employer and labour in a manner that did not exist in the modern workshops, the conditions under which men worked were much easier, and the effective working life of a man or woman employed in a factory or workshop might be taken at thirty years. So that in those days, from twenty to fifty years of age a workman was fairly sure of steady and regular employment with less strenuous conditions than those which characterised employment to-day. But the conditions had changed. The whole tendency of capital was to syndicate and to become "trustified," the result being that the small employers were gradually being squeezed out, complex machinery was being introduced and the strenuousness of factory life so accentuated for the workpeople as almost to reach breaking point. The average working life in a factory to-day from the expiry of apprenticeship was not more than twenty years, and if something was not done now to give a pension to those who were sixty-five and over, in ten years' time the Labour Members would have to plead in this House for an old age pension for persons of fifty years of age and upwards. He had said that in the factories and workshops men and women became too old at fifty, but many Members who were acquainted with railway companies and engineering works would bear him out when he said that within recent years railway companies and large engineering concerns were taking care that men over forty should not be employed. There were men in London to-day in the cabinet-making trade—men who had come under his own observation—who were among the best craftsmen of the City of London, and who had been warned when grey hairs appeared on their heads that unless they were inclined to accept employment at a less price than that paid to younger and more vigorous men they would not be required. It had been urged that a workman who had been in good work for thirty years ought to have been able to have made provision for his old age, but Mr. Rowntree, who had dealt with this question so far as York was concerned, had conclusively proved that it was utterly impossible for a workman to provide for the days when his time of active labour had passed. When they appealed on behalf of the aged poor the House would, he thought, agree that these people were poor from no fault of their own; that where a man had a wife and three children to keep what he earned not only did not allow a margin for any provision for his old age, but, in fact, was not sufficient to provide food up to the ordinary standard of workhouse living for his family. These people were the creatures of circumstances over which they had no control. It was generally agreed that many of the aged poor required help, and the only question appeared to be what that help ought to be. He and those who supported him thought it ought to come from the State; that the people of this country should rise to a sense of their responsibility in this matter, and enable aged persons to live through the decline of their lives under easy circumstances. The last census showed 2,118,216 people over the age of sixty-five. It was not suggested that all those were in poverty, but it was believed that half of them were in a position requiring the help of old age pensions. 400.000 persons over the age of sixty-five were in receipt of indoor and outdoor relief, and when the fact that there were considerably over 1,000,000 people over that age in want was taken into consideration one naturally desired to know by what means those who were not in receipt of relief were kept. The answer was not far to seek. The sons and daughters of the aged poor did all they could to keep their parents from that Bastile, known as the workhouse, and from the taint of poverty. In dealing with the question of pensions for the aged poor he hoped the Chancellor of the Exchequer would, when estimating the cost, take into account what it cost to keep our aged poor now inside the workhouse. He submitted that it would be far better and more humane if that were given in the shape of pensions rather than in the shape of relief in the workhouse. He would say that the average cost of keeping our aged poor would be about 6s. 6d. per head. Well, they were moderate in their demands. They asked that a pension of 5s. a week should be given to the aged poor in order to keep them in their homes free from the taint of the workhouse. This question -of old age pensions was submitted to the Premier and the Chancellor of the Exchequer some time ago and he had been dissatisfied with the somewhat unsympathetic reply which that deputation received. The Labour Party were quite willing to admit that the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer might be embarrassed in finding money owing to the wasteful expenditure of the last ten years, but the Government were able to find money for extra battleships and for more troops, and he submitted that this question ought to come before those, and that money ought to be found for a scheme of old-age pensions. We were unquestionably the richest country in Europe to-day. We had a total income of £18,000,000,000. 5,000,000 out of the total 43,000,000 of population took more than half the total income of the country, and during the last few years the assessable incomes had increased from £600,000,000 to £800,000,000. Therefore, what we had to do to get the money for old-age pensions was to broaden the basis of taxation and to get at the un-earned increment which was entirely the result of communal effort, and the product of which should be used for social services such as the feeding of the underfed and starving children at that period of their lives when sustenance was essential, and providing people with pensions when they were too old to work. We could easily do with a gunboat or two less and a battalion or two less, and by that means much money would be saved for old-age pensions. He desired to see this country always in the van of progress, and foremost in the desire to uplift humanity; but on the question of old-age pensions England was far behind her Colonies and every country in Europe, with the exception of Russia. New Zealand, in 1898, passed a law giving its aged poor, out of the consolidated fund, a sum of 6s. 11d., a week, or £18 a year; and, not satisfied with that, they subsequently amended the Act, and the aged poor now received a pension of 10s. a week. The Government of Australia also granted a pension of 10s., and the people were able to claim that 10s. a week as a right and not as charity if they had resided in the Commonwealth for twenty-five years. The Colonies and the countries of Europe were ahead of us in this matter of old-age pensions. They had become conscious of the fact that these old men and women were those who had helped to make the nation prosperous, when in their youth and vigour, and should therefore be sustained when their industrial usefulness had passed. He certainly thought the resources of the country ought to be taxed to provide pensions for the aged poor. He hoped in the course of the discussion which would take place upon this Motion the Government would do more than give expression to a mere pious opinion, and that the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer would find some means whereby money might be had from the National Purse for this purpose. He moved.

Mr. GROVE (Northamptonshire, S.), in seconding the Amendment, said his hon. friend had chosen a most opportune moment for bringing forward this Motion. Hon. Members had just come back from close contact with their constituencies where many of them had been brought into touch with the poor, and had seen the state of poverty in which so many of the working classes had to spend their declining years. In addition to the time being in itself favourable for bringing forward a Motion of this character, the Labour Party recognised the fact that in an appeal to the Liberal Government while yet it was in the full strength and vigour of its youth lay their last chance of having an old-age pension scheme inscribed on the Statute-book. They had nothing to hope for from the Unionist Party. The front Opposition bench had but one occupant; on the benches behind were but seven Members, and that beggarly array truly represented the interest of the Unionist Party in this great problem of labour. The Prime Minister could not devote to better purpose the vast and mighty power which had been placed in his hands than in an attempt to find the means of helping the poor in their old age. The question was often asked—Where was the money to come from? His reply was that it could be got by means of a graduated income-tax. He was sure it was within the financial ability of the present Chancellor of the Exchequer to supplement Sir William Harcourt's death duties by bringing in what he would call "life duties," which would compel the possessors of over-gorged incomes to pay out of their superfluity for the support in old age of the men and women to whose labours in their prime they owed their wealth. It was said that such a scheme would destroy thrift. But was it not idle to talk of thrift in the case of a man with 12s. or 15s. a week and a family to support? It was said also that it would pauperise the people. A Cabinet Minister received a pension under certain circumstances. Was he considered to be pauperised? In like manner there could be no degradation in a working man receiving a pension at the end of his days of toil

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That, in the opinion of this House, a measure is urgently needed in order that out of funds provided by taxation provision can be made for the payment of a pension to all the aged subjects of His Majesty in the United Kingdom." (*Mr. O'Grady.*)

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. Asquith, Fifeshire, E.): Regarding this Motion as I do as an affirmation of a principle, and reserving as I must do on behalf of the Government the fullest liberty as to the time, mode, and extent of the application of that principle, I shall certainly offer no opposition to its acceptance by the House. This is one of the subjects, few and rare I am sorry to say, as to which I believe there is no difference of opinion in any quarter of the House. I subscribe entirely to what has been said by the hon. Gentleman who so ably moved the Resolution, and my hon. friend who has returned to this House and whom we welcome so heartily from this side, as to the gravity of the evils and dangers which this aspect of our social position brings into relief. To my mind, the two most tragic things in our modern social condition are the figures of the man who wants work and cannot find it and of the man who is past work and has to beg for his bread and his bed. So long as those figures remain in the foreground of our life here in Great Britain and Ireland they constitute a standing reproach to our civilisation and a perpetual problem for statesmen. I say, therefore, on the broad grounds of principle on which this Motion has been put forward, not only is there no reluctance on the part of the Government to accept it, but there is the strongest and keenest possible desire by every means we can find available and practicable to further the object that the hon. Gentleman has in view. But it is, of course, my duty, as Chancellor of the Exchequer, not to content myself with bare words of sympathy; still less, I venture to say, to be guilty of the worst form of political quackery, which is to make promises you do not see your way to perform. I must, therefore, point out to the House that our position in this respect is a very different one from what it was even ten years ago. I think it is something like ten years since old-age pensions took a prominent place in political programmes. Yes, Sir, and how do we stand to-day compared to the position in which the country was then? During those ten years our annual national expenditure has risen by £40,000,000. Old taxes have been increased. The income-tax stands now at 1s. in the pound in a time of profound peace, the tea duty has been raised, and new taxes have been imposed, like the duty on sugar. And perhaps most serious of all, in the course of that time the aggregate capital liabilities of the State have risen from £652,000,000 to £796,000,000, an addition of nearly £150,000,000. It is no part of my purpose to-night, though it will be perhaps on a subsequent occasion, to discuss the causes and assign the responsibilities for this state of things. I simply point out that to the House as showing the enormously enhanced difficulties with which the statesman who approaches this problem with the most earnest desire to solve it is encumbered at every step he takes on the road. The hon. Gentleman who moved the Resolution, and I think my hon. friend who seconded it, spoke rather lightly of the question of cost. But, after all, cost lies at the very root of the whole matter. Allusion has been made to the case of other countries. Our fellow-subjects in New Zealand have established a system of old-age pensions on, I think, a rather more liberal scale than is proposed here. I find they are spending every year in developing and carrying out that scheme £200,000. That is a very large sum for a community with a population which does not exceed somewhere between 800,000 and 900,000. Denmark, I think, has made, on the whole, the most successful, as it was the first, effort to deal with the problem, an effort which I hope, in some of its main aspects, we may be able to imitate and develop for ourselves. In Denmark, the cost of the system of old-age pensions as it at present exists, and has existed for something like ten years, is about £216,000 a year, spread over a population of 2,500,000—again a very heavy charge upon the community. Now, as both hon. Gentlemen have pointed out, this matter has been investigated and inquired into almost *ad nauseam* by Royal Commissions and Select Committees for something like fifteen years. We had the Aberdare Committee and the Rothschild Committee, and they were followed in 1899 by a Select Committee of this House, whose report was of the utmost value and deserves to be carefully studied, and who came to the conclusion that it would be practicable to create in this country a workable system of old-age pensions. They based their opinion on two important grounds—first of all upon the successful operation of the scheme which had been adopted in Denmark, and next upon the satisfactory results of the pension schemes established in this country by the Charity Commission. The conclusion of that Committee was that a man should be entitled as a right to claim an old-age pension subject to his satisfying a large number of conditions. He was to be a British subject, he was to be sixty-five years of age, he was to have a clean criminal record for a considerable period of time, and he was not to have received poor law relief except in special circumstances within the last ten years, he was to reside within the pension authority's district, he was not to have an income of more than 10s. a week, and he must give some kind of proof that to the best of his ability he had endeavoured to maintain himself. I am not saying that all those conditions must necessarily accompany any scheme of old-age pensions; but conditions of some kind, undoubtedly, there must be—conditions as to character, conditions as to residence, and I should certainly say myself conditions as to means. It was in consequence of the Report of that Committee, if the House will remember, that a Departmental Committee of experts was appointed, presided over by an eminent civil servant, Sir Edward Hamilton, to consider what the cost of carrying out this scheme would be. They found, taking the year 1901, that the population of the United Kingdom, over sixty-five years of age, might be estimated at a little over 2,000,000. If the whole of these 2,000,000 were to be entitled to receive a pension upon the scale suggested by the hon. Gentleman, 5s. a week—that is to say, £ 3 a year—the total cost would obviously be £26,000,000. But from these 2,000,000 people the Select Committee deducted no less than 1,350,000 as persons who would not come within the conditions which have been suggested, leaving 650,000 people who would legitimately become entitled to pensions charged upon the exchequer or the rates, as the case might be. Assuming that these people were to receive a pension varying somewhere between 7s. and 5s. 6d. a week, the estimated total annual cost would be £10,300,000. I think Sir Edward Hamilton has since stated that he believes that to be under estimated; it might approach something like £13,000,000, These are very serious figures. Whether we take £26,000,000, which is the outside estimate, whether we take £13,000,000, or whether we take £10,000,000, they are formidable, and, indeed, almost intractable sums. What I want the House seriously to consider is from what source and by what means are we going to provide funds for this purpose? I am not going into the question of the relative predominance of the various issues which were raised before the country at the recent general election. But I think my hon. friends behind me will agree that there is one point which we on this side of the House have come here to face. That is to do everything in our power to secure retrenchment, reduction of taxation, and economy in the public service. The Army and Navy presents fields of possible extravagance, and, certainly, not of possible, but of practicable reductions. There is no man in this House who entertains that sentiment more profoundly than I do myself; but let me point out that there are only two ways, two practicable ways, in which you can reduce expenditure upon the Army and Navy. What are they? In the case of the Army, by reducing the numbers of your permanent fighting force. There is no other way of doing it. And, in the case of the Navy, by contracting your shipbuilding programme. And, as my right hon. friend the Secretary of State for War pointed out the other night when he was introducing the Army Estimates, in the long run those are questions of policy. A Government which is pledged, as we are pledged—no men have given stronger assurances to the people than we have—to pursue, by every means in our power, a policy of pacific and conciliatory intercourse with the other nations of the world is a Government which is bound to take steps, speedy and substantial steps, in both the directions I have mentioned. [Cheers.] Yes, Sir, but when those cheers have subsided, let me point out to my hon. friends, to both sides of the House, as many previous incumbents of my position have had to point out, that the worst offenders in this matter are not the heads of the spending departments. Who are they? The Members of the House of Commons. Just let me ask the House to remember how it has been engaged since it came here just a month ago. As soon as we had disposed of the Address, an hon. Gentleman, I think sitting there [indicating the benches occupied by the Labour Party] raised a demand for free postage for Members of Parliament, a return to the old system of franking which was abolished because of the abuses it had led to and also its enormous cost. The next day the House proceeded to pass, with unanimity, the Second Reading of a Bill to provide free meals for all the underfed children in our elementary schools. We followed that up, I think the next night or the next night but one, by recording, by an enormous majority, the necessity of throwing the burden of returning officers' expenses off the shoulders of Members of Parliament and candidates upon the public. And the House finished up the week by passing, with an enormous majority, a Motion declaring the urgent necessity of voting out of public funds a stipend of not less than £300 a year to each one of its own Members. A very good week's work for a Parliament elected to promote retrenchment and economy! I am not going to abuse this occasion by discussing the abstract merits of these various propositions. With many of them, though not with all, I am myself in most hearty sympathy. But I must point out to the House this practical conclusion, which I want them to draw, that social reform, as we see and realise more clearly every day and every week that we sit here, in the long run depends upon increased expenditure, and that, if we are to proceed in these matters at all, we must show some sense of proportion—a sense of proportion, I mean, as between the relative urgency and the relative importance of the different reforms upon which our hearts are set.

Mr. DAVID MACIVER (Liverpool, Kirkdale): Tax the foreigners, as other countries do.

Mr. ASQUITH: We are to provide the money by returning to the impoverishing futilities of the days of protection, when, for every penny you get from the foreigner, you will be paying twopence or threepence more out of your own pocket! It is not by such a road as that that we shall attain these great social reforms. What I am pointing out to the House, what, I think, they will believe I am pointing out in no spirit of want of sympathy with the great objects we all have in view, is that what we have to do is, in the first place, to introduce some relative sense of proportion into the various demands we make; and, in the next place, we must be content, as I am sure we must in this matter of old-age pensions, having regard to the enormous scope of the problem, to proceed gradually, step by step. For my part I am not without hope—I believe that great reductions in public expenditure are possible. I have spoken of the Army and Navy. I do not see my right hon. friend the President of the Board of Education on this bench. Appearances are very delusive, but my right hon. friend is, from this point of view, very little better than a professional bandit. I do not want to starve education, but I entertain the heretical opinion that, without any diminution of efficiency, we might introduce considerable economies even into our system of education, though the House must recognise that that is one great and growing source of annually increasing expenditure. There is another direction, also—I am not going to boast or to make improvident predictions—in which I trust we may look for fresh means for dealing with these social problems. It is not by taxing the foreigner, not by increasing the cost of the prime necessaries of life, not by reducing wages and lowering the standard of comfort, which is the inevitable result of a return to protection; but by such a readjustment of the burdens and incidence of taxation as will make a rational fiscal system more productive than it is at present, and as will apportion the ever-increasing weight of administering the affairs of this country and provide for the social needs of its people with greater justice and equality than at present. Those are the directions in which the Government hope, not at once, but gradually, and, I hope, effectually, to make some progress towards the solution of this problem. We have got here in this new House of Commons, I am glad to recognise, driving power such as we have never had before, which ought to constitute an effective impulse towards social reform; and I am sure the majority of the House, while unanimously accepting this Resolution, will not think that I am in any sense wanting in sympathy with its object or in an eager desire to bring it at the earliest moment into practical effect if I say that I feel also that patience, and prudence, and adjustment are necessary.

*MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER (Croydon): I greatly regret the manner in which this subject was dealt with by the hon. Member for South Northamptonshire, who made a surprising attack on the Party in this House to which I belong. I think that was quite uncalled for, and it had no relevancy whatever to the subject we are discussing. It was also quite contrary to the well known history of the Party to which I belong. The Home Secretary spoke quite truly when he said that this question was not the particular possession of any Party in this House. It is a matter which is well known to the Members of the House, and it has frequently engaged the attention of all parties. There is probably no Member in the House who would not like to see the proposal realised. The hon. Member for South Northamptonshire was good enough to twit the Opposition for not being present in much larger numbers. I think after the speech of the Chancellor of the Exchequer he will see some reason to modify that censure. I think we might have foreseen what has actually taken place. The other night we heard how the late Sir William Harcourt, burning with anxiety to achieve a great reform said—

> "I have neither the time nor the money."

and how, two years later, with the same spirit animating him, he made the same reply. A few nights ago the Prime Minister, dealing with the same subject and animated by the same spirit, said he had neither the time nor the money to carry it out. The Chancellor of the Exchequer has made substantially the same reply to-night in regard to the question now before the House. The hon. Member for South Northamptonshire appealed to the present Government with perfect confidence to realise an ideal, which he said hon. Gentlemen on this side neither desired nor were competent to realise. I do not know that his confidence was so thoroughly well placed as he supposed it was. This is a subject of far too much importance to be dealt with in the spirit of the speech of the hon. Member for South Northamptonshire. We all agree with the Chancellor of the Exchequer in feeling that the position of a man who has worked hard all his life and by no fault of his own finds himself in penury in his old age is one which deserves the utmost sympathy. A great many more people than most persons suspect are near to that dangerous and unhappy position. And this applies not only to those who receive a weekly wage, but to those who live on a monthly salary, and who as a class are reluctant to betray the poverty which oppresses them, and prefer by the habit of their life and on principle to suffer in silence. If we could remove that dread which hangs over the lives of so many of the population we should confer an enormous boon, not only on individuals, but on the nation at large. But what I want is a little more guidance from the Government as to the direction in which their thoughts are tending in this matter. I came here to-night to learn, and I have been rather fired by the unjust attack made by the hon. Member for South Northampton. I have been a student of this subject for a considerable length of time. I find that it is a subject which divides itself into two main branches of thought. It is quite clear that you cannot study what is going on in the new world or the old, or in the southern Pacific, without seeing that there are two distinct currents of thought animating the minds of men who are studying this matter. I say that the whole practical application of this doctrine in Europe has been on one line alone, and that is the line of co-operation between the person for whom the pension is intended and the State. I think I am right in saying that that is the almost universal rule. In Germany it is certainly the rule. Denmark there is a very large contribution on the part of the individual, for in that country a very large number of conditions have to be fulfilled by the recipient of a State pension. I think I am right in saying that the recipient must not have been convicted of an offence, and that he must have been in receipt of certain wages in order to be entitled to a particular pension. I am not now arguing for the one line or the other. What I wish to show is that there are two distinct currents of thought. One is that the pension should be given entirely independently of any contribution on the part of the individual; the other is that through some organised body, such as the friendly societies, there should be a contribution on the part of the individual. I want to know in which direction the ideas of the Chancellor of the Exchequer tend, because that will make an ernomous difference to the whole consideration of this problem. It will affect the money point of view, and it will affect what I may call the moral point of view. There are a great many people in this country who believe that, there is virtue in self-help. There are some who take the opposite view. I know that perfectly well, and so do hon. Members below the gangway.

Mr. CROOKS (Woolwich): Everyone of us believes in it. We are not going to be slandered in that way.

*Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER: I think I may ask some indulgence in this matter. I have said what I believe to be the view of hon. Members below the gangway. They think that not only those who fail through no fault of their own, but that the just and the unjust, the successful and the unsuccessful, everyone, in fact, should receive a pension. I can see a moral ground for that contention. Those who hold that view say anything else involves differentiation which you have no right to make. They say that it is a duty which the State owes to every citizen alike. But there are others who do not take that view. I myself should like to see some contribution on the part of the individual towards this relief in old age. I should be glad if any member of the Government would tell us which is the view they take. I gather that at the present moment they take the view that I take. The Chancellor of the Exchequer says that this relief must be conditioned by character, by residence, and by means. But a great extension may be given to all those limitations. Character may mean freedom from conviction for felony or it may mean the record of a life in which a man has shown a desire to occupy himself in profitable industry whenever the opportunity has been given. Residence may mean short or long residence, it may bring in those who are now coming into this country in great crowds from abroad, or include only those who have resided here for over twenty years. Means may mean a contribution by the individual to the cost of his pension.

Mr. ASQUITH: I did not mean that.

*Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER: I only said it was one interpretation of means. [An Hon. Member: What is Mr. Chamberlain's theory?] I do not think that that interruption is either a good or a wise one. This matter is one of very grave importance, and must be discussed before a settlement of it can be approached. The Chancellor of the Exchequer has read us a lecture, which I am sure we all deserve, with regard to the question of means in another sense. He has told us that this reform is to be postponed until we have all learned to be good boys and not to spend too much money. I do not recollect that ten years ago in the halcyon period of which he speaks there was any very strong action taken in that direction by the Party opposite. [An Hon. Member: What about Mr. Chamberlain?] I do not think the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham belonged to the Party opposite at that time, but he did a good deal towards forming public opinion on this matter. Where is the practical application of the principle to-night? [An Hon. Member:

Ask that at the end of ten years.] That is not a very helpful answer to my question. When I refer to what my right hon. friend did to arouse public opinion on this question, I am told to wait ten years to see whether somebody else will be more successful than he was. In his lecture about ways and means the Chancellor of the Exchequer has not nearly exhausted the demands made upon our purse. I have been keeping a sort of diary from day to day of the form economies are taking, and up to the present I reckon they will mean an additional expenditure of about £10,000,000 a year. [Cries of "No."] I think they would. The right hon. Gentleman has omitted from his enumeration of expenses the week-end tickets for the Chinese.

MR. ASQUITH: What do you mean by week-end tickets?

*MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: I am repeating the phrase used in another place for return tickets for the Chinese now in South Africa. There is also the Resolution respecting payments in Government establishments. [AN HON. MEMBER: A very good thing.] I am not saying it is not a good thing, but it will add to the list of very costly items. I was doing my best to add to the long enumeration the right hon. Gentleman has already given. His enumeration was not complete. When he said that it was proposed to give free meals to underfed children he did injustice to the Bill which was brought before the House, because it was proposed to give meals to all children. [AN HON. MEMBER: And to recover the cost from the parents.] I do not think the hon. Member seriously believes that can be done. We are all agreed as to the problem we are hoping to see solved. But how we are to solve it the right hon. Gentleman has not told us. I do not think the right hon. Gentleman knows. I do believe it is incumbent on the Government to give us a lead on the matter. I hope the hon. Member below the gangway will help us through the initial stage of the matter, that he will help us to see what the Government think on this problem. If any member of the Government will tell us their view on this question I think we shall be glad to pursue our studies and to bring our contribution to the solution of the problem much more easily than we can otherwise do.

*MR. GOOCH (Bath) said he honestly thought that this was the most urgent and pressing of social reforms, and one that would terminate much undeserved misery and suffering Reference was made by the introducer of the Motion to the various steps along the somewhat tedious way which the old age movement had had to tread, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer had shown what formidable obstacles there were to be encountered before anything could be done. He felt that considerable progress towards agreement had been made during these later dull years. The present Parliament had freed itself more than ever from the old cramping and paralysing prejudices against State action, and they were no more afraid of calling in the State to grapple with old age pensions than they were of calling in the State a year ago to deal with the unemployed. He did not support the policy that had been associated for many years with the name of the right hon. Member for West Birmingham. He thought he was right in saying that there were only two European countries where a pension system was fully at work—Germany and Denmark. In Germany contributions were required for individuals from the age of seventeen years. Similar amounts were paid by the employers, and the State made an addition. He did not think that the German system was worth all the money spent upon it. The facts and opinions published by Mr. Charles

Booth on this subject deserved attention. His own belief was that the example we ought to follow was to be found rather in Denmark than in Germany, and the working of the system in that small and prosperous country should be carefully studied by anyone who had the framing of a measure for pensions for this country. He agreed with the Chancellor of the Exchequer that conditions must be introduced as a test of character. Mr. Charles Booth said that the applicant for a pension must have kept free of poor law relief, and from the police courts. In Denmark the fundamental conditions were that the State made the pension outright without any direct contribution from the individual. The recipient was required to show that he had not received poor law relief for ten years before the age of sixty, when he was entitled to make his claim; that he had never been in the police courts; that he proved to the satisfaction of the Pension Commissioners that his reduced financial condition was not due to his own fault—to drink, or to any vice or thriftlessness on his part, and that his savings did not provide him with more than about £5 per year. There was more elasticity about this system than about the German or the New Zealand systems. When the age of sixty was reached questions were asked which no honest man could object to answer, and the claim for pension had to be backed up by two ratepayers. The applicant had to say if he had any friends or children with whom he could reside. It was astonishing how many people over sixty years of age there were who had no relatives to go to. A very interesting article by Miss Edith Sellers on old-age pensions appeared four years ago in the *Nineteenth Century.* That lady had gone through a London workhouse, containing 700 inmates, half of whom were invalids. An enormous number of those not invalids had nowhere to go and had no children. The number of people over sixty-five years of age to whom an outdoor pension would have been of any real assistance was extraordinary small. In Denmark the allowance was from 2s. 6d. to 6s. per week, if the pensioners could live with their friends or their children, but for those who had no friends or children with whom they could live homes were provided, the cost of which to the State was about 1s. per day per head, where they lived without restricted rules, not as paupers, but as retired civil servants so to speak. They enjoyed the Parliamentary franchise and were proud of their position, for it was a testimony to good character. He agreed with the right hon. Member for Croydon that the question of thrift was of the utmost importance. The Danish system was introduced in 1891. It had therefore been sixteen years in operation, and so far from the deposits in the savings banks going down, they had gone up considerably. That was a sufficient answer to the doubts which had been expressed that an old-age pension scheme would destroy thrift. If the pension was 10s. or 15s. a week, he admitted that it would destroy thrift, and he would oppose it; but if, as in Denmark, the pension in no case exceeded 6s. a week, he believed that it would be the greatest possible stimulus to thrift, for as it was not possible to live on that amount people would try and save enough to bring them in another half-a-crown a week or so. The only point of the Danish system which would not be applicable here was that part of the pensions was provided by the State and part by the Communes. The State part of the contribution, it was interesting to know, was derived from an extra tax on beer. It was the duty of those who were removed from all apprehension of old-age poverty to endeavour to secure a better state of things for those people who had spent most of their working life in a struggle for existence. The least that we could do for these old people was to see that their latter days were days of contentment and peace.

Mr. SAMUEL ROBERTS (Sheffield, Eccleshall) said that as a Royal Commission and two or three Committees had inquired into this subject the House need not hesitate to come to a decision upon it. The problem to be solved was to do something to alleviate the condition of the aged poor without destroying thrift, which they all knew was going on among the working classes. In 1900 the number of members of friendly societies in the United Kingdom was 11,000,000, in 1903 it had risen to 13,000,000, while the valuation of their capital funds had risen from £39,000,000 to £47,000,000. The number of depositors in the Post Office Savings Bank had doubled in fourteen years, and the amount of their deposits had increased from £67,000,000 to £148,000,000. A statement issued by the Local Government Board showed that there were 253,000 indoor poor in the country, and 547,000 outdoor poor, and one-third of these were sixty-five years of age and upwards. It was quite clear from the inquiries made by the late Mr. Ritchie, and the returns obtained by the hon. Member for Morpeth, that the poverty of those people over sixty-five years of age came almost entirely from their old age, because they could not work and earn wages sufficient to keep them. But another class should be provided for, viz., those who were doing the very best for themselves, and endeavouring to keep themselves and their families off the poor law. The report of the Chaplin Committee went fully into the matter of the conditions which should be imposed on old-age pensioners. He agreed that the applicant for a pension must have a good character, be able to show that for a certain number of years he had not received poor law relief, and that he had endeavoured to make some provision for himself. The Chaplin Committee had formed an opinion that it was practical to establish a workable system of old-age pensions in the United Kingdom. As the Chancellor of the Exchequer had told the House, Mr. Chaplin's Committee estimated that if their scheme were adopted it would cost, in 1901, £10,000,000, and that by the year 1921 the number of pensioners would have so increased that the amount required would be £15,000,000. He maintained that under present conditions such a scheme was impracticable. He suggested that a beginning should be made by a small State contribution of, say, £2,000,000, supplemented by a similar contribution from the local authorities. At all events a beginning might be made by giving pensions to the most deserving. The right hon. Member for West Birmingham himself had said that we should only proceed step by step, and it was only in that way that we should arrive at satisfactory results. He was afraid that this debate must necessarily be of an acamedic character; but he hoped that when the report of the Royal Commission on the Poor Law was issued, which he trusted would be before very long, some scheme would be forthcoming for making the lives of our aged poor more humane and more happy than they were at present.

Mr. J. W. WILSON (Worcestershire, N.) said he was glad of the privilege of saying a few words on this subject, and he would endeavour not to cover ground already touched upon by other speakers. From personal experience he thoroughly believed, not only in the form, but in the practicability of old-age pensions. He felt that if the problem had been tackled more largely by manufacturers and employers it would have been found that a pension scheme was not a very heavy matter when spread over a large number of years. If new industrial companies were to set aside

2 per cent. of the wages they paid their men they would have ample funds to make pensions to their old people. This was a matter which the State was bound to face, because the regulations which were passed by the House year by year made it more difficult for a man who had passed the prime of life to obtain a re-engagement. If the country did not take up this question the poor law guardians would have to do it, and establish a more extravagant form of relief than old-age pensions would be. Instead of shutting poor people up in large institutions it would be better for them and for the State if they were provided with an old-age pension in a state of independence. Fifty years ago there was more of the old feudal spirit than now, and employers would not let their old work people go to the poor house. Nowadays the case was different, with numerous liability companies, under paid managership. The manager was bound, in the interests of his shareholders, to engage only the best men, and therefore he could not act in that sympathetic, fatherly manner that used to subsist between employer and workman. Whether the problem was to be solved in one way or another, we ought to make a beginning. If the finance would not stand old-age pensions at sixty, why should they not make the age sixty-five? But at any rate we ought to make a beginning by which we could gain experience and proceed further if the system was found to work. He appealed to the Government to make use of the information which had been acquired by committees in this country and in foreign countries and the Colonies. They heard a great deal of the Chancellor of the Exchequer tapping new sources of income. He wanted to see this system of old-age pensions hung upon a definite tax and a substantial start made.

*Mr. E. EDWARDS (Hanley) said that in rising to make his first speech in this House he desired to associate himself with the Resolution moved by the hon. Member opposite, and to emphasise the remarks made by him, which he thought proved that even Labour Members were capable of putting a case before the House. The hon. Member started with a fact which was fairly well known, viz., that industries carried on to-day were not comparable with industries carried on thirty or forty years ago. In these days of trusts and companies the position of the worker in his old age was very different to what it was thirty or forty years ago. He wished to bring before the House the incidents of a trade with which he had been associated since he was nine years of age—the mining industry. He admitted that the right hon. Gentleman opposite gave to the workers of this country a great boon in the Workmen's Compensation Act, but he would suggest that it would have been a wise and statesmanlike measure if that Act had been preceded by an old age pension scheme. With all the advantages of the Workmen's Compensation Act, however, the worker had discovered that he had now much more difficulty in finding employment, not because he was physically unfit to work but because he had grown grey in the service of a particular combination. He should not like to say anything against the character of the great employers of labour or the great colliery owners of the country, for whom he had a high respect. But he recognised that in this highly competitive age limited companies were not so much in touch with the men and had not so much regard for them as the employers of fifty years ago. What happened was that rather than run the risk of having to pay compensation for injury, when a man was advanced in years they quietly gave him fourteen days notice and he was left to drift anywhere in the world. Friendly societies had been referred to, but as one who knew something of their working he wished to point out that the industrious workman who was a member of a trade union or a friendly society—and with all the faults of British workmen there were thousands who struggled to make provision for themselves—found when out of work at fifty, fifty-five or sixty years of age, that the society could not help him. The medical officer declined to grant a certificate for sickness, as the man was physically capable of work. It was not a question of wages, but a question of declining to take the responsibility under the Workmen's Compensation Act when a man was advanced in years, and he wished to emphasise that point as one of the strong reasons why the House should accept the Motion. He had found in many years of life in connection with local government that no one in the world had the least objection to an old age pension, and had no difficulty in getting it if he had a large sum of money behind him and was a highly paid official in the employ of a corporation or the State. The right of pension was never questioned except in the case of a poor man. He was pleased to think that there appeared to be no difference of opinion in the House, at least as to the principle, and he earnestly hoped the question would not be made a Party one. Surely all agreed that it was not creditable to a great civilised nation—a nation that all should be proud of—that so many old men, in the evening of their lives, were found without means of subsistence in a country so wealthy. He would urge on the Government that the question was one which should be taken up, even if some other matters before the country were postponed. It was a question which appealed to everyone on the highest grounds, and should be dealt with with all possible dispatch. As for the necessary funds, he only hoped the nation would be as ready to find them as it was to find the money needed for the war. Whatever was the predominant factor in the election which returned this man or that, there was certainly no question which excited so much interest and sympathy as this. He hoped they would have not only the assurance of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, but positive evidence that Ministers were in earnest. Otherwise the Government, strong as it was, might find, at the end of five years, that the public was disappointed. This was one of the questions which the workmen representatives thought should be taken up, if not in this session at all events in the next, and he did not know of anything which would crown a Government with more glory, whether Liberal or Unionist, than to have dealt successfully with this problem.

*MR. PIKE PEASE (Darlington) said that the hon. Member for Bath had referred to the question of old age pensions in other countries in Europe, and if he (Mr. Pease) might be allowed to say so, it seemed to him that the scheme in vogue in Belgium was the one which might most easily be adopted in this country. In our present state of civilisation it was almost impossible for us not to feel an enormous amount of pity for those who at the age of sixty or sixty-five years found themselves, through no fault of their own, in a state of pauperism. It had been suggested by the Labour Party that a scheme of old age pensions might be introduced, whereby every man and woman over the age of sixty unable to support themselves would receive the sum of 10s. a week. He believed that the total number of such persons was approximately 3,000,000. If each of these received 10s. a week the total annual expenditure would amount to £78,000,000, or capitalised it would amount to a total sum of two or three thousand millions. The hon. Member for Woolwich thought that 5s. a week would be of very little use and that many people would not feel any richer if they were in receipt of such a sum. In the opinion of the hon. Member for Woolwich, however, many people would feel that they were little better off in the receipt of such a sum than they were under the present poor law system. It seemed to him that they could not arrange any system without exemptions of some kind. There were many people in this country to whom a pension of £26 a year would be useless; and, of course, they would have to take into account the question of State pensioners and as to whether they were eligible to receive old age pensions. It was a fact that about two-thirds of the men and women over sixty years of age were in want and were only kept to a great extent from starvation by the charity of relations. He thought it was extremely necessary that something should be done in the way of relieving this class of the community. Dealing with the subject in a broader sense, he believed that retrenchment might be secured if the Colonies were asked to pay a contribution towards national defence with special application to the Navy. Referring to the question of vagrancy, he certainly hoped the Government would deal with the matter in the near future. Every one knew that there was a large number of persons in this country who were existing at the present time entirely upon charity, and if the Government could deal with them upon the lines of the Report before the House to-day they would be doing something in the way of finding a solution of a most important problem.

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. JOHN BURNS, Battersea): Few debates have been more creditable to the head and the heart of the House than the debate of this evening. There is perhaps a reason for it. We are all getting older, and the necessity of an old age provision dawns upon most of us with greater force as the number of our years increase, while to those in want outside, the approach of old age is not only more serious but a dark tragedy. There is universal sympathy for the condition of the old. Burns wrote—

> "Then age and want—oh ill-matched pair."

Nothing truer has been written or said of poverty in its old age. But the House has to devise some means by which old age shall suffer less want, and the evening of its days shall not be dependent either upon private charity or upon pauperising support out of rates and taxes. The Poor Law Commission sitting is considering this important question, and to some extent he fact that it is sitting impedes the immediate solution of the question by this or by any other Government within the next two or three years. I think that the Government has done wisely in accepting the Resolution, qualified with the provision that means shall be found to attain the end. But the theory of the need for some old age pension is universally endorsed by the House. I have been asked to give details of what the scheme will be like. It is impossible for me to do that, but in my judgment the best, the simplest, and the fairest scheme is the universal scheme put forward by Mr. Charles Booth. By that scheme everybody is to receive a pension irrespective of condition and means. Personally, I would not attach too much importance to character, because I have known many good fellows unable to pass a Sunday school examination, who, in many respects, are as deserving of an old age pension as men who have been regular in their attendance at Sunday school and at church. The best and fairest scheme is, therefore, the universal scheme, starting at 5s. a week at sixty years of age. But, although the fairest and the wisest scheme, it is the costliest. The cheaper, and perhaps more experimental, plan would be to accept the 5s. universal scheme, ruling out those who already receive Army, Navy, Civil Service, and municipal pensions. The total cost would be lightened by nearly £8,000,000 if all these were excluded. There are 170,000 persons who receive these £8,000,000 of public money in the way of pension or retired pay. It is true we should not save anything like all this money by this process, but it would considerably lighten the cost of a universal scheme. Beyond those there are the 30,000 friendly society pensioners, who equally could not be deprived of their pension. I only put forward these figures to show that for certain classes of men who contribute to the wealth of the State provision is made, and made in many cases for people whose services from the reproductive point of view are not so valuable as those of the miner, the engineer, and the carpenter. If this large sum could be used for pensions for retirements and superannuation, then in my judgment there is an equally strong claim, and with many sections of workmen a stronger claim, to sympathetic consideration than some of the sections who receive this large sum of £8,000,000, a considerable portion of which may for an experimental beginning be ruled out of the universal plan when they receive more than a certain amount per annum. I now come to the case of the poor law. There is a little misapprehension about the saving that might be effected in connection with the poor law. In England and Wales last year there were 800,000 men, women, and children dependent upon the poor rate for subsistence. They cost £14,000,000 per annum. Of these nearly 300,000 were sixty-five years and over, and to keep them in and out of the workhouse £6,000,000 is necessary out of the £14,000,000. It must not be assumed, however, that we could deduct from the cost of a universal scheme these £6,000,000, because there are thousands and scores of thousands of the 300,000 who would be infinitely worse off outside the workhouse with 5s. than they are in the workhouse frequently costing the community from 8s. a week in some workhouses, 10s. in aged poor relief homes, up to as much as 16s. or 17s. in the old age infirmary. We must not, therefore, count too much upon saving the larger proportion of the £6,000,000 I have referred to. What is more, I believe the tendency would be to give a smaller number of persons than those included in the universal scheme a larger amount than 5s. outside to look after themselves, and we would have to make the workhouses for the honest, industrious, decent poor more in the nature of almshouses, increasing the happiness and adding to the liberty of their inmates. I know a union in London which has taken the aged couples out of the ordinary workhouse, and put them into an aged couples' home, where they are infinitely better off than they would be living in one room in a poor street where they might be victimised by younger people. In eight cases out of ten where I have made inquiries I have found that the old people would be rather in this aged couples' home than outside with a combined pension of from 15s. to 20s. a week. They have said that to me individually. My view is that, pending the adoption of an old age pensions scheme, the workhouse has to be converted into an almshouse for the aged, giving greater freedom and greater liberty, to be further humanised and brightened, while the infirmaries should be converted into hospitals. Children ought to be kept out of workhouses altogether if possible, and pending an old age pension scheme we want a classification in the existing workhouses so that we can more or less differentiate those classes of people which are neither desirable nor attractive to decent old folk. We have to press on with this pending the adoption of some experimental scheme. We must not forget another fact. We must be careful that the adoption of an old age pension scheme, whether it be large or small, whether universal or limited, does not mask from our attention the fact that many trades and industries are prematurely ageing the men and forcing them into the workhouse or the hospital. To lengthen the health of working life is as desirable as providing for the pensionable period. Consequently with an old age pension we have to do our best to lengthen the life of men, by not allowing the child to force the mother into the workhouse or the mother and the child forcing the father out of the factory on to the streets, and forcing the burden, as we too frequently do, upon the child, the youth, the girl, and the mother, and working the man too hard between twenty and fifty years of age, and between fifty and sixty-five, when he dies, giving him casual work, or forcing him on to a pension scheme or into the workhouse. My view is that whatever is done should not be done according to any cast-iron formula. If we were Latin people we should adopt a universal 5s. a week pension scheme at once, but being Anglo-Saxon, and therefore not prisoners to phrases, the responsibility will be placed upon Ministers of making a commencement upon the scheme. I believe that as soon as the Poor Law Commission reports there will be, with the results of past inquiries, sufficient material with which to make a beginning. Whether we begin with a universal scheme or a modified one with income disqualifications, I do not think we need quarrel about, but the time has arrived for action, and, given the means and opportunity, it is the intention of the Government to do something on this subject. We have reason to be proud of the fact that between 12,000,000 and 13,000,000 of our population are members of 28,000 trade unions and friendly societies with benevolent aims and objects, but the fact is to some extent responsible for the non-introduction of a State or communal old age pension scheme. The excellent provision made by our people out of their means for sickness, accident, and old age has deferred consideration of the question. I believe that trade unionists now realise that, excellent though their objects are, this question falls outside their areas and their power, however good their inclination may be. But we must still keep the workmen in their unions for industrial purposes and in their friendly societies for sick and accident pay and encourage them to identify themselves with the co-operative movement. We have to see that the *morale* of the British workman is still maintained and his independence buttressed and strengthened. I believe it is possible to do all these things and yet have some form of old age pension scheme to which the man who is too poor to belong to a union has a right to look. At the same time I believe that the British people, with their practical temperament, will bring to bear upon any Government—this Government certainly—sufficient reasonable, disciplined, and well-organised pressure to compel or, better still, to persuade them, as soon as means and opportunities allow, to begin some form of old age pension. I hope we shall have no more inquiries or committees, and that it will not be necessary for either Chancellors of the Exchequer or Presidents of the Local Government Board to give any more pledges, but that they will take opportunity and occasion by the hand and bring a measure of relief to the aged poor who have asked for it for so long and who will not be happy until they have secured it.

Major ANSTRUTHER-GRAY (St. Andrews Burghs) said he should like to claim the indulgence of the House as a new Member, for all through his election campaign he advocated old age pensions, and he accounted it a privilege to be allowed to speak on that subject to-night. The right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board, if he understood him rightly, indicated that it would take two years before they could get an old age pension scheme. It was a world of pities that they must wait for two years while men and women were dying from starvation. He could not help feeling when both sides of the House were unanimous on this subject, as he believed they were, because charity and sympathy were not the monopolies of any one side, that something might be done without waiting for the long period that had been mentioned. He knew the subject was full of difficulties, but difficulties were made for statesmen to overcome. If it were impossible to find money to pay these old age pensions at the age of sixty-five, they might at least make a beginning at a greater age, say seventy-five, or even eighty-five or ninety. The sooner they could do something to mitigate the sufferings of our aged poor the better for the credit of this great country.

Mr. CROOKS (Woolwich) said he did not want the House to be under the impression that it was ever possible to make a workhouse a home. It never could be done and never would be done. There was not a board of guardians in the United Kingdom that had not done everything to make people happy and contented in the "house." After all, it was but a gilded cage. "Good nursing, good food, good treatment, and a holiday occasionally"—he always said to inmates, "Then you have nothing to complain of." "No, indeed," came the answer; "but it is not home." A little back room under any circumstances would still be the castle of an Englishman.

*MR. LUPTON (Lincolnshire, Sleaford) said the President of the Local Government had delighted the House with his promises of the future, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer had delighted themwith his great sympathy, but it was surprising how poor they were and how the House could not do what their hearts dictated. The national income was 1,800 million sterling a year, and yet the country was so poor that we could not afford £18,000,000 to save the old people from misery. He thought a beginning might be made at once. The President of the Local Government Board might give instructions which would have that effect. A very slight increase in the amount of outdoor relief given would completely transform the life of the poor in many agricultural districts. In one union the allowance was 3s. 6d. a week and in another 5s.; 1s. 6d. extra made all the difference. They might incidentally remove the electoral disabilities from people receiving outdoor relief and so remove the stigma of pauperism. There might also be some improvements made at once in the conditions of the people in the workhouses. No doubt there would always have to be workhouses. Not every poor person wished to live at home, but there was no reason why the workhouse should not be improved, and a vast improvement could be made for an extra 2d. in the £. The same amount might be added to that which went to the poor outside the workhouse. In this way they would fulfil their promises to a certain extent, and it would make a great deal of difference in the life of these poor people.

Question put, and agreed to.

Resolved, "That, in the opinion of this House, a measure is urgently needed in order that out of funds provided by taxation provision can be made for the payment of a pension to all the aged subjects of His Majesty in the United Kingdom."—(*Mr. O'Grady.*)

PHARMACY BILL.

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Debate arising,

MR. CLAUDE HAY (Shoreditch, Hoxton) said that at that time of the night the Bill could not be adequately discussed, but on behalf of a number of his constituents he had to protest against a Bill which would interfere with their occupation. So far as he understood the Bill, it practically gave a sort of monopoly to limited companies, which would interfere with those who had many onerous and difficult duties cast upon them. Chemists in various districts of London felt very keenly upon this subject. They said it was an attempt to filch their rights from them—to permit poisons and other commodities to be sold by what could only be called a subterfuge by persons who were not qualified and who had not been subjected to the training and tests of those in private trade.

And, it being midnight, the debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed upon Tuesday next.

Adjourned at three minutes after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Thursday, 15*th March,* 1906.

Several Lords took the Oath.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

The LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House that the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the Certificates from the Examiners that the Standing Orders applicable to the following Bills have been complied with:—West Cumberland Electric Tramways [H.L.]; Alexandra (Newport and South Wales) Docks and Railway [H.L.].

The same were ordered to lie on the Table.

Manchester and Milford Railway Bill [H.L.]. A witness ordered to attend the Select Committee.

Kidderminster Gas Bill [H.L.]. Reported, with Amendments.

Wallis' Divorce Bill [H.L.]. Amendment reported (according to Order), and Bill to be read 3ª on Monday next.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

TRADE REPORTS: ANNUAL SERIES.

No. 3537. Portugal (Trade of Oporto for the year 1905).

JUDICIAL STATISTICS (ENGLAND AND WALES) 1904 (PART I. CRIMINAL STATISTICS).

Statistics relating to criminal proceedings, police, coroners, prisons, reformatory and industrial schools, and criminals lunatics, for the year 1904.

Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table.

LIMITED PARTNERSHIPS BILL [H.L.]

[SECOND READING.]

Order of the day for the Second Reading read.

*LORD AVEBURY: My Lords, I have introduced this Bill at the request of the Associated Chambers of Commerce. It proposes to introduce the system of limited partnership which is known in the United States and on the Continent as *commandite* and gives general satisfaction. Indeed, I have on more than one occasion heard the late Lord Overstone and my father regret very much that this system was not introduced here before that of limited liability. It would have led up to the other, and no doubt have saved the country heavy losses and much suffering,

The Bill is not new to your Lordships, for it was carried through this House some years ago by the late Lord Bramwell, who was not only a great lawyer but a high commercial authority. The fact that he thought so highly of it as to have carried it through the House will no doubt go far to commend it to your Lordships. It has also been read a second time in the House of Commons, and been through the ordeal of a Select Committee. That it is not now the law of the land is solely due to the congestion of business in the other House.

Under the Bill a limited partnership must contain one or more "general partners," who are to be jointly liable for all debts and obligations incurred by the firm in the usual course of the business. But the "limited partners" are not to be liable for the firm's debts and obligations beyond the specific amount contributed by them as capital at the time of entering the partnership. While a limited partner thus has his responsibility considerably contracted, he is not entrusted with much power. He may from time to time inspect the books of the firm and examine into the state and prospects of the business, and "he may advise with his partners thereon." But he is not authorised to bind the firm or to interfere or take an active part in the management of the business. Should he do anything in this way, he would at once be deemed a general partner.

The consent of the limited partners or a majority of them, if they are more than two, is, however, made necessary for the introduction of a new general partner into the firm, or for a change in the firm's name or in the nature of

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

the business carried on. It is only the general partners who will be liable to be made bankrupt in respect of the partnership's dealings. But on a general partner becoming bankrupt a limited partner will not be able to recover any portion of the capital contributed by him to the firm, or any interest or profit thereon, until the claims of the creditors of the firm have been satisfied. In all respects that are not expressly excluded by the Bill, the law as to ordinary partnerships is to apply. Before a limited partnership commences business its registration is required, the matters to be registered including the term for which the parnership is entered into, and the sum contributed by each limited partner, and whether this is paid in cash or how otherwise. The register, which is to be kept by the Registrar of Joint Stock Companies, is to be open for inspection on the payment of a small fee; as also are the registers to be kept by County Court Registrars of all abstracts of "statements," which are to be sent by the chief registrar to the County Court within whose jurisdiction a business is situate.

My noble friend Lord Aldenham, whom I consulted in the matter, had intended to be present to support the Motion for the Second Reading of this Bill, but he is unfortunately kept away by family bereavement, which I am sure we all regret. My noble friend by my side was a Member of the House of Commons Committee appointed to consider the Limited Companies Acts. He speaks, I need hardly say, with the very highest authority on all matters of a commercial character, and I hope he will give your Lordships the benefit of his experience. The Bill, as I have said, has the unanimous support of the Associated Chambers of Commerce, and is regarded as of such importance by the commercial community generally, that I trust your Lordships will agree to the Second Reading.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª."—(*Lord Avebury.*)

*LORD FABER: My Lords, I should like to say a few words in support of the Motion which my noble friend has just moved. I had the privilege of serving on the Special Committee appointed by the late Government to consider the Limited Companies Acts. That Committee has not issued its Report up to the present, but I think there is no breach of confidence in saying that though that Committee did not specially look into the matter of limited partnership, yet in the course of their inquiry they had before them a mass of evidence from Germany, France, and America, all of which was favourable to limited partnership.

I think I shall be able to show your Lordships that in certain cases, at any rate, limited partnerships are very useful. For instance, I will take the case of an ordinary company being, for some reason or other, owing to a death or the desire of one partner to go out, in want of capital. That company knows of a certain man who would like to go into partnership if his liability was ascertained, but who would not enter if he stood to lose all he had. He would go in if under a system of limited partnership he would be liable only for say £10,000, £20,000, £50,000, or whatever the sum might be in respect of which he was registered. Therefore both the firm and the incoming partner would be benefited by reason of this limited partnership, for the company would get the partner they desired to have, and the partner would get good interest from the company without running the risk of being ruined. It may be said that we already have limited companies; why do we want limited partnership? There is this difference between the two. Limited partnerships, if this Bill is passed, will consist of one or two gentlemen whose liability is limited in the way I have indicated, whereas the liability of the other partners in the concern will be unlimited, and all they have will be at stake. The liability of every one in a limited company is limited, and if bad times come it is possible for them to lose their shares and run away, so that when the poor creditors turn up for their money there is nobody with souls to curse or bodies to kick. If the Bill is passed there will be three kinds of companies—an unlimited company, which is the best kind of all where creditors are concerned; a limited partnership, which is the next best thing, as the general partners will be responsible to the extent of the whole of their property; and limited companies, in which the liability is limited all round. Both the Chambers of Commerce and the commercial community generally are in favour of limited partnerships, and I trust your Lordships will see fit to give the Bill a Second Reading.

On Question, Bill read 2ª, and committed to a Committee of the whole House on Thursday next.

Naval Prize Bill [H.L.]; Prize Courts Bill [H.L.]; Judicature Bill [H.L.]; House in Committee (according to Order); Bills reported without amendment: Standing Committee negatived; and Bills to be read 3ª on Monday next.

Polling Districts (County Councils) Bill [H.L.]; Polling Arrangements (Parliamentary Boroughs) Bill [H.L.]. Read 3ª (according to Order), and passed, and sent to the Commons.

HOUSE OF LORDS OFFICES.

First Report from the Select Committee considered (according to Order), and agreed to.

COMMITTEE OF SELECTION FOR THE STANDING COMMITTEE.

Report from, That the Committee have nominated the following Lords to serve as Chairmen of the Standing Committee:

E. Spencer.
E. Onslow.
E. Camperdown.
V. Cross.
V. St. Aldwyn.
L. Balfour.
L. Burghclere.

Read, and ordered to lie on the Table.

STANDING COMMITTEE.

Report from the Committee of Chairmen of the Standing Committee, That they have appointed the Viscount Cross Chairman of the Standing Committee; read and ordered to lie on the Table.

House adjourned at a quarter before Five o'clock, till To-morrow, half-past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Thursday, 15*th March*, 1906.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS (STANDING ORDERS 66 AND 67 NOT COMPLIED WITH.)

Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, referred on the the First Reading thereof, Standing Orders 66 and 67 have not been complied with, viz.:—Cork City Railways and Works Bill.

Ordered, That the Report be referred to the Select Committee on Standing Orders.

Hampstead Garden Suburb Bill (by Order); Read a second time, and committed.

London, Brighton, and South Coast Railway Bill (by Order); Second Reading deferred till Tuesday next (Evening Sitting).

London County Council (Tramways and Improvements) Bill, "To empower the London County Council to construct and work tramways in the counties of London and Middlesex; and to make street improvements and other works and acquire lands; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and ordered to be read a second time.

Middlesex County Council (Tramways) Bill, "For empowering the County Council of Middlesex to construct a tramway in the Edgware Road and to widen portions of that road; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and ordered to be read a second time.

PETITION.

SUTTON, SOUTHCOATES, AND DRYPOOL GAS BILL.

Petition for additional Provision; referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

LIQUOR TRAFFIC LOCAL VETO (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petition from Glasgow, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

LOCAL AUTHORITIES (QUALIFICATION OF WOMEN) BILL.

Petition from Huddersfield, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

PUBLIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS (RELIGIOUS TEACHING.)

Petitions against alteration of Law; From Bacup; Croston (two); Cuddesdon; Doctor Lane; Failsworth; Garstang (two); Hawick; Kirkham; Knaresdale; Salford; Skelton; Stoke Albany; Treales; Wesham; Whitechapel (two); and Yeaveley (two); to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUOR ON SUNDAY.

Petition from Lincoln, for prohibition; to lie upon the Table.

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

That they have passed a Bill, intituled "An Act to alter the constitution of the Dover Harbour Board." [Dover Harbour Board Bill] [Lords.]

DOVER HARBOUR BOARD BILL [LORDS].

Read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

JUDICIAL STATISTICS (ENGLAND AND WALES).

Copy presented, of Judicial Statistics, Part I., relating to Criminal Proceedings, Police, Coroners, Prisons, Reformatory and Industrial Schools, and Criminal Lunatics, for England and Wales for 1904 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).

Copy presented, of Diplomatic and Consular Report, Annual Series, No. 3537 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

MAGISTRATES (SCOTLAND).

Return ordered, "of the number of Magistrates appointed in the different counties of Scotland, with their names, descriptions, and addresses, from the date of the last Return in 1893 to the present time."—(*Mr. Eugene Wason.*)

PRICES OF EXPORTED COAL.

Return ordered, "giving the quantities of Coal exported from each of the principal ports in the United Kingdom in every quarterly period since the imposition of the Coal Duty in 1901, at prices not exceeding 5s., above 5s. but not exceeding 6s.; above 6s. but not exceeding 7s.; above 7s. but not exceeding 8s., and above 8s."—(*Mr. David Thomas.*)

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Church Tithes and Glebes.

MR. D. A. THOMAS (Merthyr Tydvil): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he can now give, by parishes and counties, any changes that may have occurred in the tithes, glebe, and properties of the Church of England in Wales since the issue of Parliamentary Paper, No. 240, session 1894, and any changes in the disposition of the revenue derived from those sources.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Gladstone.*) I have made inquiry of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners about this matter. I find from them that the information contained in the Return of 1894 is still substantially correct, and that the fresh particulars for which the hon. Member asks would, in all probability, be so insignificant in amount as to be of little value, while to obtain them would be a task of considerable magnitude, which would take a long time to complete. In these circumstances I do not at present think there is sufficient justification for asking the Ecclesiastical Commissioners to undertake the very serious labour which would be involved.

Appointment of Provincial Clerk-in-Charge at Belfast Post Office.

MR. SLOAN (Belfast, S.): To ask the Postmaster-General under what circumstances the usual practice of inviting applications from the whole indoor staff, for the position of provincial clerk in charge at Belfast, was departed from on a recent occasion, when three men were selected to do this work; what special qualifications the men selected possessed; and why men with longer service and better qualifications were passed over.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) It is not the practice to invite applications from the staff for the duty of taking charge of vacant offices. I am assured that the three officers whose names were recently added to this list are not only fully competent to perform the duties, but were considered to be the most suitable of the eligible officers.

Belfast Postmen's Duties.

MR. SLOAN: To ask the Postmaster-General under what circumstances the junior head postman at Belfast is retained permanently on a regular duty while his seniors, equally capable men, are compelled to rotate on irregular duties with irregular hours.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) The arrangement has been adopted as that which appears to be the most convenient under the circumstances.

Good Conduct Stripes for Post Office Night Messengers.

MR. SLOAN: To ask the Postmaster-General whether, in view of the work and the rate of pay of adult night messengers, he will consider the advisability of granting them good conduct stripes similar to those which postmen are entitled to.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) The question has been carefully considered at various times; but, as I informed the hon. Member for West Nottingham on the 12th instant, it has not been thought desirable to extend the practice of granting good conduct stripes.

Ecclesiastical Commission on Surveyor's, Architects and Legal Expenses.

MR. HERBERT ROBERTS (Denbighshire, W.): To ask the hon. Member for the Eye Division of Suffolk as Church Estates Commissioner whether he will give the main items of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners' charges of management of estates for each of the financial years 1900 to 1905, both inclusive; and whether he will further give similar information with regard to the surveyors' and architects' charges for the same period.

MR. HERBERT ROBERTS: To ask the hon. Member for the Eye Division of Suffolk, as Church Estates Commissioner whether he will give, under separate heads, the legal expenses of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners for each of the financial years 1900 to 1905, both inclusive.

(*Answered by Mr. Stuart-Wortley.*) The Ecclesiastical Commissioners' accounts are published in a complete form every year in the Appendix to their Report, and in these appear the amounts of the several charges about which the hon. Member asks. The legal expenses, surveyors' charges, and architects' charges for the years 1890 to 1904 were further set out in the reply given to Mr. Stevenson's Question on the 9th March 1905.† They are, however, again given for the years 1900 to 1905 in the following table of expenses, including charges of management, paid out of the Commissioners Common Fund. The total gross rental of estates belonging to the Commissioners for their common fund, and of Episcopal Permanent Estates managed by them, in respect of which these expenses are mainly incurred, is also given for the same years.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cxlii., 904–5.

Year ending 31st October.	Charges of management.					Surveyor's charges.	Architects' charges.	Legal expenses.	Gross rental of estates.
	Agency.	Expenses at audits.	Sundry expenses.	Bailiffs' salaries, etc.	Receipt stamps, etc.				
	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
1900	42,117 10 0	1,566 15 11	1,133 18 9	929 11 7	314 8 5	7,164 12 11	1,280 10 11	6,576 7 1	1,505,182 12 10
1901	42,492 8 6	1,484 15 5	1,406 2 7	1,092 0 8	439 9 0	7,130 2 9	1,148 8 3	7,158 19 5	1,549,561 17 9
1902	43,002 1 4	1,442 8 2	1,554 15 8	1,168 19 8	404 9 8	8,208 19 3	1,506 19 9	10,136 10 0	1,589,495 9 9
1903	43,266 13 4	1,372 16 3	2,075 15 0	1,108 4 0	355 19 10	7,294 7 0	1,256 3 6	8,540 10 1	1,585,847 13 1
1904	43,907 13 1	1,404 14 3	1,635 15 7	1,199 3 9	385 18 10	8,464 0 10	1,528 3 6	7,498 17 5	1,611,104 4 4
1905	44,763 18 10	1,293 0 4	1,517 8 8	1,149 19 6	290 5 9	7,273 11 0	1,607 7 0	8,040 7 9	1,639,837 6 11

Coastguards Royal Marines—Number of Commission Officers and Musicians.

MR. BYLES (Salford, N.): To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty what is the reason for the increase in the number of commissioned officers of coastguard, and of commissioned officers and musicians of Royal Marines in Estimates, which show a reduction in the numbers of the coastguard and of the Royal Marines.

(*Answered by Mr. Edmund Robertson.*) Owing to the abolition of the cruiser sailing service, a certain number of commissioned chief officers became redundant and are being absorbed into coastguard service ashore in lieu of chief officers of warrant rank. The increase, therefore, is only apparent, as the readjustments have reduced the total number of officers of the shore service and the cruiser service combined by twelve. There is no change in the total number of commissioned officers of the Royal Marines. The increase of two in the number under Vote 1 is counter-balanced by a corresponding decrease in the numbers under other Votes. The increase in the number of musicians, Royal Marines, is due (1) to naval band ratings being replaced by Marine bandsmen under the new scheme; and (2) to the numbers for 1906–7 including bank ranks, buglers and musicians, whereas the numbers for the previous year included buglers and certain musicians only, the band ranks and the rest of the musicians having been included in the rank and file numbers as explained in note B on page 20 of the Navy Estimates for 1906–7.

Grant of Land in Rhodesia to Sir John Willoughby.

MR. CONOR O'KELLY (Mayo, N.): To ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether his attention has been called to the inclusive concession to Sir John Willoughby of 200 square miles of diamondiferous territory in Central Rhodesia; whether any petition of protest on the subject has been received from the white inhabitants of Central Rhodesia; and if the Government intend to take any steps in the matter.

(*Answered by Mr. Churchill.*) The Secretary of State has just received a telegram from a committee of the inhabitants of Gwelo through the High Commissioner for South Africa, but the infor mation which it contains is not sufficient to enable him to form an opinion on the matter. It will be necessary to await the Report of the High Commissioner before further considering the matter.

Prices of Wheat in Germany and the United Kingdom.

MR. RENDALL (Gloucestershire, Thornbury): To ask the President of the Board of Trade what the average prices of home-grown and imported wheat were respectively in Germany during the five years ending December 31st, 1905; and what were respectively the average prices of home-grown and imported wheat in the United Kingdom during a similar period.

(*Answered by Mr. Lloyd-George.*) The following gives the information asked for so far as it is available:—

Years.	United Kingdom.		Germany.	
	Average Price of English Wheat. Per Quarter.	Average Import Price of Wheat. Per Quarter.	Average Price of Wheat at Berlin. Per Quarter.	Average Import Price of Wheat. Per Quarter.
	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.
1901 - -	26 9	28 4	35 8	28 10
1902 - -	28 1	28 7	35 6	28 6
1903 - -	26 9	29 1	35 1	28 6
1904 - -	28 4	30 0	38 0	30 3
1905 - -	29 8	31 0	38 1	30 11

The Berlin price stated may include ome imported wheat. Imported wheat forms about one-third of the German supply.

Royal Commissions, Committees, etc.—Cost and Number.

MR. J. F. MASON (Windsor): To ask the Secretary to the Treasury if he will give a list of the Royal Commissions, Select Committees, Joint Committees, and Departmental Committees appointed and announced by the Government; and what is the estimated cost of these inquiries during 1906–7.

(*Answered by Mr. McKenna.*) The notice given me by the hon. Member has not been sufficient to enable me to prepare a complete Answer; but, so far as I am aware, the Afforestation and Foreshore Commission is the only one which has been announced, but has not yet been appointed by the Government. The names of most of the Royal Commissions and Departmental Committees at present appointed will be found in the Estimate for Temporary Commissions, Vote 1, of Class VII., in the Civil Service Estimates for 1906–7. A few, however, have been omitted because the expenditure likely to be incurred by them in 1906–7 appeared to be trifling, if anything at all. These are the War Stores and Motor Cars Commissions, the Small Holdings, Agricultural Settlements, Expenditure on Education, and Royal Hibernian Academy Committees. The cost of the Commissions and Committees not shown in the Estimate is included in the margin of £12,659 for contingencies, provided under Subhead L. The Select Committees which have been appointed to date are, so far as I am aware, Education (Provision of Meals) Bill, House of Commons Procedure, Butter, Post Office Employés, Police and Sanitary, Kitchen and Refreshment Rooms, Public Petitions, Selection, and Public Accounts Committees, the last four being sessional. The cost of these Select Committees is borne on the House of Commons Vote, but it has not been the practice to estimate for them specifically. With regard to that part of the Question which deals with Departmental Committees, I have no information to give the hon. Member, as these Committees may be appointed by the Department concerned without the knowledge of the Treasury, and their expenses are borne on the Department's own Vote.

Irish Expenditure.

MR. JOHN O'CONNOR (Kildare, N.): To ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether it is the custom in estimating the amount of the expenditure upon Imperial services in Ireland, to charge such expenditure against the Irish Revenue Account; and whether he is aware that the Royal Commission on Financial Relations reported that no portion of the Imperial expenditure could, in their view, be regarded as local, or as a set-off to excessive taxation (page 25 of Report), and that to make a charge for Irish purposes, would be to do what the constitution does not sanction (page 103); and, if so, will he state by what authority such a custom is sanctioned, and at what date such a custom began.

(*Answered by Mr. McKenna.*) In the Financial Relations Returns, Ireland is not charged with the expenditure on any Imperial service. If the hon. Member will refer to the Annual Returns, he will find that the total expenditure is classified therein under the four heads of "English Services," "Scottish Services," ' Irish Services," and "General Services." The last-mentioned heading includes the charges for the National Debt, the Army and Navy, the Diplomatic, Consular, and Colonial services, and other services which may be called "Imperial," in the sense that they are carried on for the benefit of the United Kingdom as a whole. No part of that expenditure is set down against Ireland. The passages which the hon. Member quotes from the Report of the Financial Relations Commission do not occur in the General Report, which was signed by eleven of the thirteen members, but in two Supplementary Reports, one of which was signed by five, and the other by three of the members. It would be impossible for His Majesty's Government to accept the view of those Members that, in considering the burden of taxation upon Ireland, no regard is to be paid to the amount of the charge for purely Irish services, which is defrayed out of State Revenues. The Act of Union contemplated that the total expenditure of the United Kingdom should be "defrayed indiscriminately by equal taxes imposed on the same articles in each country," subject only to such particular abatements and exemptions in Ireland or Scotland as circumstances might require. That is the system now in force. No constitutional rule is infringed if, in considering the financial position of Ireland, we take account of the fact that, since the date of the Union, it has become the practice to devote large sums out of the Revenues raised by the State to the assistance of the local authorities, to contributions to the cost of education, and the other services of local application; and that the sums thus applied in the three countries are not in the same proportions as their contributions to Revenue. That method has been followed with the sanction of this House since 1890, when a Select Committee was appointed to consider the equity of the financial relations of the three countries with regard, not only to their contributions to Revenue, but also to their shares in expenditure.

Intimidation of Michael Fynn at Athenry.

MR. LONSDALE (Armagh, Mid): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that on Sunday March 4th threatening notices, couched in violent language, and bearing drawings of coffins and rifles, were found posted up opposite the Roman Catholic church at Athenry; and, seeing that these notices contained threats against Michael Fynn, a small farmer, who recently resumed the holding of a grazing farm at Rockmore, will he say what steps are being taken to afford this man protection from violence.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The local police are aware that a rumour to the effect stated in the Question has been current at Athenry, but they have reason to believe that no such notice as is mentioned was found.

Lislea National School Manager.

MR. LONSDALE: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the rules of the National Commissioners of Education, with regard to the patronage and management of national schools, stipulate that a person to be eligible for the position of local manager of a school must reside within a convenient distance of the school, and must undertake to visit the school frequently, and whether such duties can be discharged satisfactorily by deputy; whether the appointment of the Rev. Mr. Simpson, as manager of the Lislea national school, is in conformity with this rule; and whether he will give the name of the local gentleman who visits the school on Mr. Simpson's behalf.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The Rule to which the hon. Member refers is as follows:—Rule 40 (E).—A person to be eligible for the position of local manager of a school must be either a clergyman or other person of good position in society, must reside within a convenient distance from the school, and must undertake to visit the school frequently, and to check and certify the correctness of the school returns furnished to the office of National Education. The Commissioners of National Education inform me that the Rev. Mr. Simpson does not reside in the locality of the school; but that their chief inspector, after holding an inquiry in the matter, recommended Mr. Simpson as the most suitable person to hold the temporary management, in view of the local differences upon the subject which existed. The local gentlemen who occasionally visits the school in supplement to the visits of Mr. Simpson is Mr. S. Wilson, J.P. I have already stated that any question as to the observance by the Commissioners of their own rules is a matter for their own decision. The Commissioners inform me that they have no present intention of upsetting the arrangements by which the Rev. Mr. Simpson is recognised as temporary manager pending the appointment of a successor to the Rev. Mr. Ingram, the former manager.

Sale of Irish Land Report.

MR. MURPHY (Kerry, E.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland when it is proposed to issue another Report showing the progress made by the Estates Commissioners in connection with sales, etc., under the Land Act, 1903.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The next Report of the Estates Commissioners will be for the year ending 31st instant, and the Commissioners inform me that they will present it as soon as possible after that date.

Applications of Tenants on the Morrogh Bernard Estates, County Kerry.

MR. MURPHY: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland what steps have been taken by the Estates Commissioners for dealing with the applications of the evicted tenants on the Morrogh Bernard estate, county Kerry; and whether any application for the sale of this estate has yet been made to the Commissioners.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The Estates Commissioners inform me that an originating application for the sale of this estate was lodged with them on January 2nd, 1906, and that they are now in communication with the vendor upon the subject of the restoration of the evicted tenants, from ten of whom applications for reinstatement have been received.

Sale of the Lauder Property at Clonfanlough, King's County.

MR. REDDY (King's County, Birr): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been directed to the advertised sale of Cruise's farms on the Lauder property at Clonfanlough, King's County; whether he is aware that Clonfanlough is a congested area; and whether, under the circumstances, he will suggest to the Estates Commissioners the advisability of purchasing these lands with a view to increasing the size of the uneconomic holdings in the neighbourhood.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) I am informed by the Estates Commissioners that they have issued to the Land Judge a request, under Section 7 of the Act of 1903, with a view to their purchasing the estate referred to. The Commissioners have informed the solicitor in charge of the proceedings for sale that, in the event of their purchasing the estate, they will expect that the lands now occupied by Mr. Cruise shall be included in the purchase as untenanted lands.

Prosecution of three Cavan Farmers.

MR. VINCENT KENNEDY (Cavan, W.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been drawn to a Motion and order for attachment against three Cavan farmers in the Land Judges' Court in Dublin on Friday last; whether the matters complained of were investigated before the ordinary tribunal; and whether, seeing that though counsel pressed for leave to appeal this was refused; and that, as the alleged offences were of a criminal nature, the constitutional right to trial by jury was denied these men, will legislation be introduced to safeguard the public should occasion again arise.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The order for attachment in this case was made by the learned Judge in the exercise of the jurisdiction inherent in him, and I have no power to interfere in the matter. The matters complained of were not, so far as I know, investigated before any other tribunal. I have seen a newspaper report of the case, from which it appears that the learned Judge declined to put a stay upon the order for attachment on the ground that, as there was no appeal from his decision in such a case, there was no reason for the stay. I understand that the law in these respects is the same in England as in Ireland.

Irish Agricultural Department Inquiry.

MR. DELANY (Queen's County, Ossory): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will state upon whose recommendation the names of the Committee appointed to inquire into the working of the Department were selected; whether there is any representative of the agricultual, industrial, or trading interests in Ireland upon the Committee; and if the scope of the inquiry will include the grievances of the staff.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The members of the Committee were selected by the Irish Government from their personal knowledge, with the exception of the member from Canada, who was suggested by the Government of the Dominion in response to a request. The two Irish members of the Committee are thoroughly acquainted with the agricultural, industrial, and trading interests of Ireland. The inquiry was never intended to be directed toward the grievances of individuals.

Evicted Tenants on the Lewis Estate at Balinagar.

MR. DUFFY (Galway, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state the number of evicted tenants on the Lewis estate, Balinagar, Loughrea; how many of them have been reinstated in their old holdings through the agency of the Land Act, 1903; and what steps do the Government propose to take with a view of reinstating them in their old homes.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The Estates Commissioners inform me that they received twenty-one applications for reinstatement from evicted tenants on this estate. None of these have been reinstated. The Commissioners referred the applications to an inspector, with the view of ascertaining whether an arrangement for reinstatement could be arrived at with the owner, but the negotiations have so far failed. The claims of the evicted tenants will be further considered, in the event of untenanted land in the locality being acquired by the Commissioners.

The Case of P. M'Donnell at Gurteenreeny, County Tipperary.

MR. KENDAL O'BRIEN (Tipperary, Mid): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Estates Commissioners will cause inquiries to be made into the circumstances of the eviction of Philip O'Donnell from his farm at Gurteenreeny, Kilcooley, county Tipperary, which is at present occupied by a planter named Thomas Pratt; and will he recommend to the Commissioners the desirability of approaching the landlord, Admiral Poe, with a view to securing the reinstatement of M'Donnell in his former holding.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The Estates Commissioners will, in pursuance of the recent regulations, make inquiries in due course into the case of Philip McDonnell, from whom an application for reinstatement has been received.

Fixing of Second Term Rents in County Limerick.

MR. O'SHAUGHNESSY (Limerick, W.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the sub-Commission, consisting of Messrs. Croasdale and Crean, when fixing second-term rents in the county of Limerick, since the Land Act, 1903, in some cases raised the rents and in other cases fixed the rents higher than the landlord's valuer; if he can say on what grounds such decisions were arrived at; whether he can also say why the Commissioners Falkiner and Baggot were removed from this county; and will he draw a comparison between the rents fixed by them and Messrs. Crean and Croasdale.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) I am informed by the Land Commission that, since the passing of the Act of 1903, fair rents have been fixed by the sub-Commission Courts in county Limerick in 504 cases. In two only of these cases were the rents fixed for a second term higher than the first-term rents. In 34 cases the former rents were confirmed, and in the remaining 468 cases the former rents were reduced. The evidence and estimates of value given in fair rent cases on behalf of the landlords and tenants, respectively, are not part of the official records of such cases. The concluding inquiries of the question refer to matters upon which the Land Commission have not given me any information, and upon which I am not in a position to express any opinion. They are not under my jurisdiction. The law provides the right of appeal from the decisions of sub-Commission Courts, as I have already repeatedly pointed out.

Army—Regulations for wearing plain Clothes.

MR. RENDALL: To ask the Secretary of State for War whether he is aware that under the Army Council's order permitting plain clothes to be worn by non-commissioned officers and well-conducted men, there is inserted a proviso that such plain clothes must not be kept in barracks and must not be worn either on quitting or returning to the soldier's station; whether he is aware that this proviso compels men to leave and return to barracks in uniform, to go long distances to their homes to change their clothes, taking with them materials for pipeclaying and polishing of buttons, and in the case of unmarried men to hire accommodation for their plain clothes; and whether he will consider the desirability of removing the proviso and permitting well-conducted men to quit and return to barracks in plain clothes.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) The proviso that plain clothes are not to be kept in barracks has been relaxed in favour of non-commissioned officers not below the rank of sergeant. The proviso that plain clothes must not be worn by a soldier, either on quitting or returning to his station will be omitted from the King's Regulations now in course of revision. In view, however, of the fact that railway companies, in spite of repeated solicitation, make the wearing of uniform a condition upon which cheap tickets are issued to soldiers proceeding on pass or furlough, this concession is of little value.

War Office Contracts and the Fair Wages Resolution.

MR. ROWLANDS (Kent, Dartford): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether the Fair Wages and Factory Clauses are inserted in all Government contracts; whether the attention of the War Office has been called to the evasion of the clauses on the part of some contractors; and, if so, whether any penalty has been inflicted.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) The fair wages clause is inserted in practically all War Office contracts, and the factory clause in all contracts affecting trades where sub-letting contrary to the recognised custom of the trade is believed to exist. All cases of alleged evasion are closely investigated, and such action is taken as is held to be appropriate to the particular case in question.

Appointment of Higher Division Clerks at the War Office.

SIR SAMUEL SCOTT (Marylebone, W.): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether, pending a decision being arrived at, it is proposed to post to the War Office in the ordinary manner gentlemen who passed the examination of clerkships in the higher division of the Civil Service; or whether all appointments are suspended.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) On an establishment of seventeen higher division clerks approved by the Treasury in 1904 there are now six vacancies. All appointments to these vacancies have been suspended under instructions from the Treasury, pending consideration of the question involved. I expect that a decision will be come to shortly.

Regimental and District Commands.

MR. CARLILE (Hertfordshire, St. Albans): To ask the Secretary of State for War with reference to the reorganisation of military commands and staff in the United Kingdom, as set forth in the special Army order of January 6th, 1905, whether the general officers commanding-in-chief furnished a Report on the working of the system; if so, what is the general opinion expressed therein regarding the grouping of the regimental districts and the establishing of infantry record offices; and will the Reports be placed upon the Table of the House.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) Reports were furnished by general officers commanding-in-chief on the matters alluded to. The information contained in them is confidential, and I am not, therefore, in a position either to give the hon. Member the information he requires or to lay the Reports upon the Table.

Naval Cadetships for Colonials.

MR. HAROLD COX (Preston): To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty to what extent cadetships in His Majesty's naval forces are reserved for the sons of Colonists; and whether reciprocally cadetships in the forces maintained by any of the self-governing Colonies are reserved for the sons of Englishmen, or Scotchmen, or Irishmen.

(*Answered by Mr. Edmund Robertson.*) Under the agreements come to at the Colonial Conference in 1902, and published in the Blue-book [Cd. 1299] of that year, appointments to naval cadetships are, subject to the candidates passing the prescribed physical and educational tests, placed at the disposal of the Secretary of State annually for the following Colonies:—Australia, eight; New Zealand, two; The Cape, two; Natal, one. Besides these thirteen, the Secretary of State may allot two more to boys belonging to Colonies which do not, like these, make a contribution to the Imperial Navy. There are no appointments in the Colonial naval forces analogous to cadetships in the Imperial Navy.

Engine Room Artificers in Charge of Machinery.

MR. BELLAIRS (Lynn Regis): To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty what is the number of vessels of 200 tons and above in which engine-room artificers, or higher grades promoted therefrom, are in sole charge of the machinery; whether, on a larger number of ships, these men are placed in watch-keeping charge of one engine-room; and whether it is contemplated to replace them in such positions by men selected from the stokers at about the age of twenty-eight years, to be trained for about three years as watch-keepers and mechanicians.

(*Answered by Mr. Edmund Robertson.*) The number of vessels is eighty-four. The answer to the second part of the Question is in the affirmative. It is contemplated that these artificers, who are in charge of one engine-room, may be replaced by mechanicians, subject to these men, who will be selected from leading stokers, qualifying for this work under the new rules on the point of being issued.

Naval Cadets.

MR. BRAMSDON (Portsmouth): To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty if he will state the number of cadets under the old scheme, who after examination passed into H.M.S. "Britannia," Dartmouth, in July 1903, November 1903, and March 1904; the number of cadets admitted in July 1903, November 1903, and March 1904, who up to the present date have been dismissed as unfit for the service; also similar information with reference to the new scheme for cadets at the Royal Naval College, Osborne.

(*Answered by Mr. Edmund Robertson.*) At Osborne all the cadets are entered strictly on probation and a proportion of them are regularly withdrawn, principally at the end of their first year. Of the total 222 boys entered between July 1903 and May 1904, twenty-five have been thus withdrawn through not making sufficient progress with their work. Two others have been discharged as physically unfit and five for misconduct. In the "Britannia" training ship, where this system of probation did not obtain, seventy cadets passed in in July 1903, sixty in November 1903, and sixty-one in March 1904. One of these boys was discharged for failing to pass the final examination, and one more for being physically unfit.

English and Irish Postal Officials.

MR. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick): To ask the Postmaster-General whether he can state how many postmasters and secretaries and superior officers have been imported into Ireland from Great Britain; and how many Irish officials have been promoted to similar positions in Great Britain.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) I deprecate the comparison implied in the hon. Member's Question, since it suggests a separation, which fortunately does not exist between the Post Office service in Great Britain and Ireland. I find that in the years 1904 and 1905 seven officers employed in Great Britain were appointed to postmasterships in Ireland, and five officers employed in Ireland were appointed to postmasterships in Great Britain.

Irish Postal Officials and the Irish Language.

MR. FIELD: To ask the Postmaster-General whether he is aware that in North and South Wales generally the postmasters are required to possess a knowledge of the Welsh language; whether he will introduce a similar rule respecting the Irish language in Ireland, especially regarding Irish-speaking districts.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) In appointing postmasters to places in Wales, it is the practice to select candidates who have a knowledge of Welsh in cases where the district surveyor reports that such knowledge is necessary. The circumstances in Ireland are not altogether similar, and I have received no evidence that inconvenience has been caused by the present system.

Herrings Landed in the Clyde Districts.

MR. LAMONT (Buteshire): To ask the Secretary for Scotland whether he will lay upon the Table a statement showing the number of hundredweights of herrings landed in the Clyde districts collectively, and in Campbeltown, Inveraray, Rothesay, Greenock, and Ballantrae individally, during the years 1889–1905, both inclusive.

(*Answered by Mr. Sinclair.*) The information required by the hon. Gentleman is as follows:—

Year.	Campbeltown	Inveraray.	Rothesay.	Greenock.	Ballantrae.	Total.
	cwts.	cwts.	cwts.	cwts.	cwts.	cwts.
1889	118,912	91,871	29,011	6,440	36,281	282,515
1890	147,987	117,775	34,597	4,151	67,606	372,116
1891	144,641	181,569	36,582	8,333	50,211	421,336
1892	160,153	175,553	11,637	4,105	19,750	371,198
1893	247,975	142,765	15,206	6,422	7,196	419,564
1894	256,712	130,721	7,135	1,889	9,288	405,745
1895	102,942	63,046	8,542	4,297	12,379	191,206
1896	53,341	64,422	8,822	2,375	8,038	136,998
1897	85,028	207,415	12,608	2,496	7,235	314,782
1898	90,624	143,161	8,492	1,188	5,597	249,062
1899	111,644	109,810	13,888	2,135	10,211	247,688
1900	141,950	86,598	7,964	661	19,154	256,327
1901	109,721	102,608	6,417	935	36,926	256,607
1902	133,058	92,181	91,171	6,567	28,130	351,107
1903	104,167	74,193	99,262	1,523	7,853	286,998
1904	45,251	27,414	26,389	950	5,090	105,094
1905	74,060	16,352	6,084	15,591	15,679	127,766

Note.—The returns for Campbeltown include, for years 1890–5, large quantities of herrings captured off Islay and Jura, amounting in 1893 to 186,931 cwts.; 1894 to 177,383 cwts., and 1895 to 42,000 cwts., after which the Islay herring fishing was a complete failure.

Cost of New Buildings being erected by Ecclesiastical Commissioners.

Mr. HERBERT ROBERTS: To ask the hon. Member for the Eye Division of Suffolk as Church Estates Commissioner, what is to be the total cost of the new buildings now being erected for the Ecclesiastical Commissioners.

(*Answered by Mr. Stuart-Wortley*). The total estimated cost of the buildings which the Ecclesiastical Commissioners are erecting at Westminster is about £150,000. The offices of the Commissioners will not occupy more than about two-fifths of the whole, and the residue is arranged for letting, and is estimated to produce rents amounting to not less than £6,000 per annum.

Ecclesiastical Commissioners and Licensed Premises.

Mr. HERBERT ROBERTS: To ask the hon. Member for the Eye Division of Suffolk, as Church Estates Commissioner whether the Ecclesiastical Commissioners will publish a Report, supplementary to the Annual Report, containing Returns showing a list of all places licensed for the sale of beer, wine, or spirits, on any of their estates, during the twelve months preceding October 31st, 1905; the dates on which the lease was granted or last renewed, and will expire; and a statement, whether or not the assent of the Commissioners was required to the license; a list of all leases granted by them during the same period; and a statement as to the insertion therein of a restrictive or prohibitive covenant as to the sale of beer, wine, or spirits; a list of the applications during that period for their leave to sell beer, wine, or spirits, and a statement as to the result of such application; a list of the places so licensed, and of beerhouses, which were suppressed by them during that period; and whether the Ecclesiastical Commissioners will in future include similar Returns in their Annual Reports.

(*Answered by Mr. Stuart-Wortley.*) The Commissioners are not prepared to add the suggested particulars to their Annual Report. The hon. Member was informed on the 8th inst.† that for over twenty years the Commissioners' leases have contained covenants prohibiting the sale of intoxicants without their leave. The twelvemonth ending October 31st, 1905, is covered by that Answer. I shall be pleased to give the hon. Member information as to the case of any particular house as to which he may wish to inquire.

Sale of a Tuberculous Cow by Farm Committee of Central London School District Managers.

MR. FIELD: To ask the President of the Local Government Board if he has any official information showing that the Farm Committee of the Central London School District Managers sold a cow, admittedly affected with tuberculosis, for 50s.; and, if so, can he say whether the Committee took any steps to prevent the carcass of this cow from being disposed of as human food.

(*Answered by Mr. John Burns.*) I have made inquiry on this subject, and am informed that the facts are as stated in the Question, but that the cow was sold on the understanding that the carcass would not be disposed of for human consumption.

Members of Alien Immigration Boards.

MR. STRAUS (Tower Hamlets, Mile End): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he will give a list of the names and addresses and occupations of the members of the different alien immigration boards; and whether he will also say on what system and by whose recommendation these gentlemen have been appointed.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Gladstone.*) The members of the boards were appointed after consultation with the mayors of the various towns and other persons of representative position. The qualifications required by the Act, and the premise of my predecessor that labour should be represented on the panels from which the boards are formed, were explained, and it was requested that names of persons willing, and known in the locality as suitable to undertake the responsible duties imposed on the boards, might be furnished. It was on these recommendations that the members were originally appointed, while additions have been and can be made to their number from time to time. The question of publication is under my consideration.

The Bankruptcy Laws.

MR. RICHARDSON (Nottingham, S.): To ask the the President of the Board of Trade if he will make the scope of the proposed Committee to consider certain amendments of the Bankruptcy Laws sufficiently wide, so that the Committee may be able to consider, not merely the discharge of bankrupts, but also the conduct of a bankrupt not having kept books, the conduct of a bankrupt afterwards trading in the name of his wife or of some other person, he not being discharged; the relation of deeds of assignment to bankruptcy, including the abuse of deeds now frequently given to questionable advertising trustees, the desirability of a limitation of the power of a dissentient creditor to upset a deed by bankruptcy within three months, the desirability of giving creditors and trustees the right of an application to the registrar of a county court to sanction or restrain direction, and the desirability of trustees in all cases giving security to the local registrar.

(*Answered by Mr. Lloyd-George.*) The reference which has already been approved by the Board of Trade deals not merely with the discharge of bankrupts, but also with a considerable portion of the subjects mentioned in the hon. Member's Question. I cannot now add to the reference.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cliii., 603.

Construction of an Additional Chancery Court.

Mr. HERBERT (Buckinghamshire, Wycombe): To ask the First Commissioner of Works whether plans have for some time been in existence, and approved by the Board of Works, for the construction of an additional Chancery Court at the Royal Courts of Justice; and if so, whether, having regard to the fact that there are now six judges of the Chancery Division and only five courts for them to sit in, it is proposed at an early day to provide the court required.

(*Answered by Mr. Harcourt.*) The plans referred to are in existence, having been prepared by the Office of Works some years ago. The late Attorney-General, in answer to a Question on May 8th, 1902,† stated that he believed any existing difficulties of accommodation might be solved by a re-arrangement of the judges' circuits.

County Court—Extention of Procedure under the Bills of Exchange Act.

Mr. MACLEAN (Bath): To ask Mr. Attorney-General, in view of the fact that, when the County Courts Act of 1903 (extending the common law jurisdiction to £100) was passed, it was omitted to provide that the procedure under the Bills of Exchange Act, 1855, should also be extended beyond the sum of £50 and up to £100, whether it is intended shortly to recommend His Majesty, by Order in Council, to extend the limit of £50 to £100 in cases where plaintiffs desire to sue in the county court upon a bill of exchange or promissory note under the said Act.

(*Answered by Sir John Walton.*) I have referred the Question to the Lord-Chancellor, who will give the subject his consideration; but I am unable to hold out much prospect of the subject being dealt with this session.

Alcohol for Industrial Purposes.

Mr. PEARCE (Tower Hamlets, Limehouse): To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether, having regard to the increasing employment of alcohol in chemical industry, he will take steps, during the present session, to free British manufacturers using alcohol from the disadvantage they now suffer compared with their foreign competitors.

(*Answered by Mr. Asquith.*) The matter is under consideration, and I hope to be able to introduce legislation at an early date.

National Expenditure and the Controller and Auditor-General.

Mr. PAUL (Northampton): To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he has considered the evidence taken and the Report made by the Select Committee on National Expenditure, appointed in 1902; and whether he proposes to continue the policy of his predecessor by withholding from the Controller and Auditor-General such items of expenditure as the Government do not think it desirable that he should see.

(*Answered by Mr. Asquith.*) I have considered the Report of the National Expenditure Committee. As regards action upon the Committee's recommendations, I would refer my hon. friend to the answer given by the First Lord of the Treasury to the hon. Member for Clackmannan on the 1st instant.‡ It is not the intention, nor would it be in the power, of His Majesty's Government to withhold details of expenditure from the Comptroller and Auditor-General. Under The Exchequer and Audit Department Act, 1866, that officer is required to certify and to Report upon all accounts of issues from the Consolidated Fund or of expenditure out of voted moneys. Section 28 of the Act gives him the right of access to the books and other documents relating to the accounts of all accounting departments. As regards other forms of expenditure, the Treasury have the power, but are under no duty, to submit the details of the accounts in fit cases for audit by the Comptroller and Auditor-General. This is a power which is frequently exercised. But in the case of grants in aid to responsible bodies, especially bodies whose income is derived from various sources, such, *e.g.*, as University Colleges or the Incorporated Law Society, it is often impracticable to adopt this course.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cvii., 1090.

‡ See (4) *Debates*, clii., 1299.

Importation of Store Pigs from Ireland to Great Britain.

MR. FIELD: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his atteniton has been called to the effect on the trade by the restrictions at present in force regarding the importation of store pigs from Ireland into Great Britain; and whether, in conjunction with the Board of Agriculture for Great Britain, he will ask the Department of Agriculture in Ireland to consider such modifications as may be safely introduced to enable greater facilities of movement.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce*): The movement of store swine from Ireland into into Great Britain was prohibited by an order of the English Board of Agriculture and Fisheries which came into operation in January, 1905. That order has recently been modified by a further order of the same Board, the effect of which was stated in my reply to a Question of the hon. Member for North Longford on the 7th instant.† When some further experience has been gained of the working of the new order, the Department of Agriculture in Ireland will be in a position to determine whether they can, with advantage, make representations to the English Board of Agriculture for a further relaxation of the restrictions.

Discharge of Boylan at Rahan at the Instigation of Mr. E. H. Browne.

MR. HAVILAND BURKE (King's County, Tullamore): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will cause inquiries to be made into the case of a young man named Boylan, who was dismissed from his employment as engine driver in saw mills erected in the parish of Rahan, King's County, on the Charleville Estate, at the repeated written requests of the estate agent, Mr. Ernest H. Browne, who is also a magistrate; and whether, in view of the fact that, although Boylan was dismissed under this pressure by Mr. Browne, his manager had no fault to find with him and expressed indignation and regret at being compelled to give him notice, his only offence being that his father had been in dispute with Mr. Browne over a right of way, a dispute in which he personally had no share, the Irish Government will consider the expediency of continuing Mr. Browne in the commission of the peace.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) I have referred this Question to the Lord Chancellor, who states that he has no information upon the matter referred to, which would seem to be one of private concern and quite unconnected with the magisterial office.

Flooding of the Little Bray.

MR. WALTER LONG (Dublin, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the floods which took place last year in Little Bray; whether he is aware that no steps have been taken to prevent a recurrence of the danger; and whether he can see his way to call the attention of the county council to the matter.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The county council of Wicklow have had this matter before them on more than one occasion, and the Local Government Board on 18th December last, in response to the council's application, sanctioned a loan of £3,500 for the purpose of making good the damage caused by the floods referred to. The county council have been advised that their powers do not enable them to deepen the river (a course suggested by their county surveyor), which might possibly be a safeguard against a recurrence of the danger.

War Office—Suggested change of Personnel.

MR. MACNEILL (Donegal, S.): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether he will shortly be in a position to inform the House of his decision in regard to the recommendation of Lord Esher's Committee, dated 26th February, 1904, that a change of personnel in the civil establishment in the War Office was of the greatest importance in the interests of the efficiency of the public service; and whether he is now considering the comments of the Comptroller and Auditor General in regard to the conduct of departmental business by the Army Council.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cliii., 429.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) As regards the first part of the Question, I must remind the hon. Member that considerable changes were made in the personnel of the civil establishment by my predecessor. As regards the second part of the Question, I have been glad to read the testimony of the Comptroller and Auditor-General in regard to the promptitude and thoroughness of the work in the War Office.

The One-Man Range-Finder.

MR. HILL (Staffordshire, Kingswinford): To ask the Secretary of State for War if it is proposed to equip the cavalry, mounted infantry, and infantry with the one-man range-finder; and, if so, how soon such equipment will take place.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) A one-man range-finder is under consideration, and, as soon as a suitable instrument has been decided upon, the question of equipping the troops will be considered.

Woolwich Qualifying Examination—Suggested Alteration of Dates.

SIR CARNE RASCH (Essex, Chelmsford): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether he will consider the advisability of holding the qualifying examinations for Woolwich in July instead of, as at present, March and September, which are inconvenient for boys and parents.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) The dates, March and September, have been fixed after careful consideration, in order that they may fit in most conveniently with the competitive examinations for the Royal Military College, and the Royal Military Academy, the Militia competitive examinations, the examinations for leaving certificate, and the periods of Militia training. While the Army Council are anxious to meet the convenience of boys and parents in every way possible, they do not see their way, at present, to making the alteration in the dates which the hon. and gallant Member suggests.

Free Railway Tickets for Members of Parliament.

MR. FIELD: To ask the first Lord of the Treasury whether, in view of the free travelling and postal facilities enjoyed by Members of the Canadian Parliament, he will consider the expediency of introducing similar advantages for the Members of this House.

(*Answered by Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman.*) I am afraid that I cannot see my way to acting upon the suggestion of the hon. Member.

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

British Indians in the Transvaal.

MR. HAROLD COX (Preston): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the grievances of the Indian traders in the Transvaal, which led to the refusal of the Indian Government to permit the recruiting of Indian coolies for work in the Transvaal, are the same grievances as those that formed the subject of complaint by the Government of Her late Majesty against the Government of the Transvaal Republic; and what steps have been taken to redress such grievances.

*THE UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. CHURCHILL, Manchester, N.W.): The main grievance which formed the subject of complaint against the Government of the Republic was their claim to limit the trading rights of British Indians in the country to locations only, which claim was upheld by their High Court in a test case in 1898. This constituted also the main grievance of the Indian Government when the question of employing Indian coolies on railway construction was under consideration in 1903. This grievance was redressed by the decision of the Supreme Court of the Transvaal in May, 1904.

MR. HAROLD COX: I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies what proposals were made by Lord Milner for conferring municipal rights upon British Indians resident in the Transvaal; why those proposals were abandoned by Lord Milner; and what steps have been taken in the matter by His Majesty's present advisers.

*MR. CHURCHILL: The hon. Member will see on reference to page 15 of Code 2104, that in 1903, when the Municipalities Ordinance was introduced, the Transvaal Government proposed to extend the municipal franchise to aliens and also to coloured British subjects who could pass a certain educational test. This would have admitted British Indians to the franchise. The proposal was abandoned because the unofficial members of Council were unanimous against the clause, and it was asserted by the opponents of any form of native franchise that the proposal was a breach of the spirit, if not of the letter, of the conditions of surrender; no steps in the matter have been taken by His Majesty's present advisers.

Transvaal Political Labour League and the New Constitution.

MR. J. R. MACDONALD (Leicester): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether Lord Selborne has transmitted the amendments which the Transvaal Political Labour League, representing the organised workmen of the Rand, has suggested should be made in the constitution of the Transvaal, promulgated under date of March 31st, 1905; and whether it is proposed to lay Papers upon the Table containing these amendments.

*MR. CHURCHILL: The Secretary of State has learnt from Lord Selborne that a despatch is on its way in regard to the views of the League. It is not proposed to lay further Papers at present on the subject of the constitution; but how to secure the effective representation of the working classes in Johannesburg is one of the matters which will certainly engage the attention of the Secretary of State.

Profits on the Transvaal Mines.

SIR GILBERT PARKER (Gravesend): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies what were the profits of the mines during the year preceding, and also during the year succeeding, the introduction of Chinese; and also what was the revenue accruing to the Government from these mining profits during the year preceding, and also during the year succeeding, the introduction of Chinese.

*MR. CHURCHILL: The profits of mines for the year June, 1903, to June, 1904, amounted to £4,712,858, and the profits for the year June, 1904, to June, 1905, to £5,737,494. The profit tax brought in £343,014 and £415,628 in in the two years.

Kaffir Troubles in Natal.

MR. J. WARD (Stoke-upon-Trent): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether Kaffirs in Natal are British subjects, and, if so, what rights they possess as such; whether he has any official information showing that the lands and property of a whole tribe were recently confiscated, without any form of trial before a legally-constituted tribunal; that the tribe are now menaced with starvation; and that the natives are often subjected to this method of procedure, as a means for inducing them to sell their labour at a low rate of wages.

*MR. CHURCHILL: The Secretary of State will make careful inquiry into the matters referred to by the hon. Member, and I hope to be able at no distant date to lay Papers on the Table dealing with the recent native troubles in Natal. But meanwhile I must remind the hon. Member that the situation in Natal has not yet ceased to be one of emergency to the whole white population, and that the colony itself is in the enjoyment of complete responsible self-government.

MR. KEIR HARDIE (Merthyr Tydvil): Will steps be taken to see that the land reserved to the Kaffirs under the dominion of the Imperial Parliament is kept for them?

*MR. CHURCHILL asked for notice of the Question.

Madeira.

MR. HILL (Staffordshire, Kingswinford): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs if any British residents in the Island of Madeira have been expropriated; and, if so, whether he will state to the House the circumstances under which such expropriation has taken place.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir EDWARD GREY, Northumberland, Berwick): No expropriation has taken place.

British Criticisms of the Congo Administration.

MR. TREVELYAN (Yorkshire, W.R., Elland): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether his attention has been called to an attack by the Minister for Belgium at Washington made against Englishmen who are criticising the administration of the Congo, on the ground that they are animated either by commercial or political greed; and to a statement of the Belgian consul at Chicago that the great rubber companies are behind this movement; and whether, in view of the character of the movement for Congo reform in England, he can take any steps to dissipate the impression which such statements may have created in the United States.

SIR EDWARD GREY: I have not seen the statements to which my hon. friend refers, but if they have been made as he states, they are quite untrue.

The Congo Inquiry.

MR. J. R. MACDONALD (Leicester): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether the Papers promised to be laid upon the Table upon the administration of the Congo State will contain a copy of the Report of the recent Commission of Inquiry, and of such of the evidence produced before the Commissioners as may be in the possession of His Majesty's Government; and whether he can state when these Papers may be expected.

SIR EDWARD GREY: It seems unnecessary to reprint as a Parliamentary Paper the whole Report, which has already been published, and the only reports of evidence produced before the Commissioners which have reached His Majesty's Government have already appeared in the public Press. But copies of the Report of the Commission will be sent to the Library.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean): Are you not going to ask for the evidence?

SIR EDWARD GREY: I understand the Congo Government are not publishing that. I will inquire, however.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE: They came very near to promising to publish it.

SIR EDWARD GREY: I will inquire.

Princess Ena.

MR. SLOAN (Belfast, S.): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether it is intended to give a grant from the public funds to Princess Ena of Battenberg on the occasion of her marriage to the King of Spain; and, if so, what opportunity, if any, will be given to discuss the same.

MR. MACVEAGH (Down, S.): Before this Question is answered, I wish to ask you, Mr. Speaker, if it is not against the practice and rules of this House to put Questions concerning members of the Royal Family.

*MR. SPEAKER: I do not know of any such practice. If there is any suggestion of a grant of money being made, I think there is no objection to such Questions being put.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. ASQUITH, Fife, E.): It is not proposed to make any grant from public funds.

Wages of Government Contracts.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN (Worcestershire, E.): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he will lay upon the Table an authorised copy of the statements made outside this House by the First Lord of the Admiralty and the Secretary of State for War on the policy of the Government in regard to wages in Government establishments, as that policy has not been fully explained in this House.

MR. ASQUITH: In my opinion the policy of the Government has been fully and clearly stated in the House by the Secretary of State for War and the Secretary to the Admiralty. If the right hon. Gentleman desires further information, the question can be raised in Committee and on Report of Supply.

Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that the Secretary to the Admiralty expressly disclaimed stating the policy of the Government and referred the House to the answers given by Ministers to deputations outside? Is this House to be dependent for information on questions of policy on outside information?

*Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER (Croydon): I raised this very precise point in debate, and up to the present moment have not received the information.

Mr. ASQUITH: Perhaps my right hon friend will repeat the Questions to the Ministers of the Departments concerned

Cocoa Imports.

Mr. D. A. THOMAS (Merthyr Tydvil): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer if he has any information which would account for the falling off in the imports of cocoa butter, from 1,331,000 lbs. in 1897 to 162,000 lbs. in 1904; whether any excise duty has been levied on this bye product in the United Kingdom corresponding to the 1d. per lb. import duty imposed as from August 7th, 1896; and, if not, will he take into consideration the possible protective character of the duty with a view to its early repeal.

Mr. ASQUITH: The imports of this article fluctuate very greatly, having fallen from 1,331,000 lbs. in 1897—a date subsequent to the imposition of the duty—to 493,000 lbs. in 1899, and rising in 1900 to 1,239,000. Since then there has been a decline until 1904, when there was again a slight increase. There are no statistics of the quantity imported before the duty was imposed, and I have no evidence that the import has been checked by an increase in the home manufacture. No excise duty is levied on cocoa butter manufactured in the United Kingdom. I am considering the question whether, and how far, the duty is protective in its operation.

Imports of Manufactured Cocoa and Tobacco.

Mr. D. A. THOMAS: I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer if his attention has been called to the small quantities of prepared cocoa and manufactured tobacco imported into the United Kingdom as compared with the quantities of raw cocoa and unmanufactured tobacco, respectively, so imported; and if he will cause inquiry to be made in order to ascertain whether the higher duties now imposed on prepared cocoa and manufactured tobacco are of a protective character, with a view to their early modification.

Mr. ASQUITH: My attention has been called to the comparatively small quantities of cocoa and tobacco imported into the United Kingdom in a manufactured state, and I am disposed to think that the additional duty on the imported manufactured article is in these cases more than the exact equivalent of the loss of interest and of duty-paid material or the expense caused to the manufacturer by excise restrictions when the manufacture takes place in bond. An exact equivalent is, however, from the nature of the case, very difficult to determine; but I am giving the subject consideration.

Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that Mr. Gladstone, in proposing the present scale of tobacco duties, expressly stated that they had been fixed so that the people employed in the trade, many of whom were women and children, might be well provided for?

Mr. ASQUITH: I cannot carry in my mind what Mr. Gladstone said in 1862. If the right hon. Gentleman will put down his Question I will answer it.

South African Mining Share Registers.

Mr. BOTTOMLEY (Hackney, S.): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he is aware that many large shareholders in South African mining companies are in the habit of altering their addresses upon the share registers, prior to the declaration of dividends, to make it appear that they are resident in South Africa, for the purpose of escaping liability for income-tax upon such dividends; and whether he will give directions to the income-tax collectors to make inquiries from the secretaries of South African mining companies, and report the result of such inquiries to the House.

Mr. ASQUITH; The Board of Inland Revenue have no knowledge of such a practice. The tax upon the profits of companies, of which the seat of direction and the register of shareholders are situated in the United Kingdom, is assessed upon the company, and not upon individual shareholders. The addresses of the shareholders in these companies are therefore not of interest to the collectors of income-tax.

Taxation on Sport.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will consider the expediency of making arrangements in the forthcoming Budget to impose special taxes on deer forests, salmon fishings, and grouse moors.

MR. ASQUITH: I see no sufficient reason for taxing these particular objects of sumptuary expenditure to the exclusion of others, and any comprehensive scheme for taxing all such expenditure would be difficult to frame and still more difficult to administer. In my opinion, the object of my hon. friend, which I take to be to secure a larger proportionate contribution to the public revenue from the wealthier classes, could be more effectively secured by other means.

MR. WEIR: And here you have enormous funds waiting to be hauled into your net!

Inland Revenue Officials' Grievances.

MR. CLAUDE HAY (Shoreditch, Hoxton): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether his attention has been called to a meeting of Inland Revenue officials recently held; and whether, in view of the grievances declared to exist by those attending that meeting, and of the representations these officers have from time to time made as to their pay and conditions of service, he will take steps to appoint a Select Committee to inquire into these grievances in the same way that the claims for inquiry by the employees of the Postal and Telegraph Departments have been granted.

MR. ASQUITH: My attention has been called to the meeting referred to, and I am prepared to consider any representations that may be made to me. I do not think there is any sufficient ground for appointing a Select Committee.

MR. CLAUDE HAY: And is that refusal based on the fact that these officers are not so numerous as the postal employees and not so powerfully organised?

[No Answer was returned.]

Inspection of Monastic and Conventual Institutions.

MR. T. L. CORBETT (Down, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been called to the increase of monastic and conventual institutions, and whether he will consider the need for their inspection; also whether he has any official information as to the regulations affecting the inspection of such institutions in other countries.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. GLADSTONE, Leeds, W.): I have no official information on the subjects mentioned in the Question and I do not propose to introduce legislation to deal with this matter.

MR. T. L. CORBETT: Will the right hon. Gentleman inquire as to the regulations in other countries?

*MR. GLADSTONE: The question is a very old one; I will consider the point.

Foreign Labour in English and Scotch Mines.

SIR W. EVANS GORDON (Tower Hamlets, Stepney): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many Poles and other foreigners are working in the mines of England and Scotland; and whether he anticipates that the new regulations under the Aliens Act will lead to an increase in the number.

*MR. GLADSTONE: I have made inquiries of the inspectors, and the estimates furnished by them (which must be taken as approximate only), show that the number of foreigners employed in mines in this country is under 3,000. The Answer to the last part of the Question is in the negative.

Administration of the Aliens Act.

SIR W. EVANS GORDON: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the

Home Department if he will recognise the formation of voluntary committees of persons interested in the exclusion of diseased and destitute aliens from this country; and if members of these committees will be allowed to attend the meetings of the immigration boards, at which committees of those interested in the case of the alien immigrant are to have a semi-official status.

*MR. GLADSTONE: I should welcome the co-operation of any voluntary agencies which in my judgment would be calculated to strengthen the just administration of the Act. As to admission to boards meetings I may point out that under Rule 23 immigration boards may allow any person to be heard to whom they give special leave, and I see no reason for altering this rule.

SIR SAMUEL SCOTT (Marylebone, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what portions of Europe have been scheduled as being in a disturbed condition; and upon whom the responsibiltiy of determining this question will in the future rest.

*MR. GLADSTONE: No such schedule has been made. The matter was explained by the Answers I gave yesterday.

SIR SAMUEL SCOTT: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what reduction of staff, engaged in administering the Aliens Act, is anticipated from his decision to allow unrestricted immigration from Russia.

*MR. GLADSTONE: I have made no such decision. If there is any change in the Home Office staff it will certainly not be a reduction.

LORD TURNOUR (Sussex, Horsham): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if a diseased alien from the Russian Empire will be allowed to land, on his assurance that he is a deserter from the Russian army and liable to religious persecution if repatriated.

MR. CLAUDE HAY: At the same time may I ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether an alien immigrant who, so far as the immigration authorities can ascertain, is a pauper, a diseased person, an idiot, or a criminal, is to be admitted to this country if he or she alleges that he or she comes from a disturbed country, or a disturbed district of a foreign country.

*MR. GLADSTONE: I am not prepared to answer hypothetical Questions with regard to the duties imposed by the Act on the immigration officers and immigration boards.

MR. CLAUDE HAY: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what steps he has taken to secure accurate information as to the political condition of the districts of foreign countries from which alien immigrants allege they have fled to England in order to avoid danger of life, limb, and property.

*MR. GLADSTONE: I answered this Question yesterday.

MR. CLAUDE HAY: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether in the exercise of his statutory discretion under the Aliens Act he is entitled, by regulations, to admit to this country alien idiots, alien paupers, aliens suffering from loathsome diseases, and persons likely to become a charge upon the public funds, if they allege that they are fleeing from religious or political persecution.

*MR. GLADSTONE: No, Sir, and I have made no such regulations.

Prison Warders' Grievances.

MR. CLAUDE HAY: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he will take steps to appoint a Select Committee to inquire into the alleged grievances of prison warders, and grant to them the right of federation in the same way as now enjoyed by the postal employees.

*MR. GLADSTONE: No grievances of prison warders have yet been brought to my notice. When they are, I will, of course, give them my consideration. As to the second part of the Question, a similar inquiry has been put to me by two other hon. Members, and I should like to defer my Answer for further consideration.

Expulsion of Foreign Criminals.

MR. CLAUDE HAY: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether it is proposed that foreign criminals convicted of felony in this country shall immediately after conviction be expelled from this country, or whether they shall become a public charge by reason of a long term of imprisonment in this country.

*MR. GLADSTONE: I have already answered this Question in the reply which I gave to the hon. Member for Liverpool, West Derby, on the 6th of this month.† If the hon. Member's suggestion were adopted, this country would become the happy hunting ground for all foreign criminals.

Case of Frances Melville.

MR. OSMOND WILLIAMS (Merionethshire): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been drawn to the sentence of three years' penal servitude passed on a woman, Frances Melville, at the North London Sessions, in February last; and whether, in view of the absence of motive for the crime charged (shoplifting), and the indication the case afforded of mental irresponsibility, he proposes taking any action in the matter.

* MR. GLADSTONE: I had not heard of this case until my attention was called to it by the hon. Member's Question. I have now made inquiry as to the woman's mental state and I find that there is nothing in her condition to justify her being certified insane. The information I have received points to drink as the cause of this unhappy woman's crimes, and I fear there is no action I can take in the matter.

MR. OSMOND WILLIAMS asked the right hon. Gentleman to bear in mind the fact that this old lady had £700 in consols and other property, and that she had collected a most miscellaneous set of articles in her room.

Bullying on the "Clio"—Case of William Crook.

MR. OSMOND WILLIAMS: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been drawn to the death of William Crook, a Bury boy, aged thirteen years, who died, in the beginning of February last, as the result of injuries received from bullying on board the "Clio" training-ship, stationed on the Menai Straits; and whether the officers in charge of the "Clio" have been censured for allowing the possibility of such bullying taking place.

* MR. GLADSTONE: I have had this unfortunate case under my consideration. The coroner's jury brought in a verdict of death from misadventure, and though it is much to be regretted that no one heard of the assault in time to prevent the injuries of the boy, I am not prepared to say that this was the result of any neglect of duty. My inquiries into the matter are not yet finished.

Case of John Joyce.

MR. C. D. SCHWANN (Cheshire, Hyde): I beg to ask the Secretary for the Home Department whether, with regard to the case of John Joyce, of Manchester, who suffered imprisonment, although innocent, and to whom the Treasury awarded £25 and a free pardon, he will consider the case and increase the allowance, as the sum already given does not cover legal expenses and the loss by breaking up the home of the innocent man during his incarceration.

* MR. GLADSTONE: In view of the special considerations which the hon. Member has laid before me, I will ask the Treasury for a further grant.

Inspection of Scottish Fish-curing Stations.

MR. J. CATHCART WASON: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many inspectors of fish-curing stations have been appointed throughout Scotland; and if he will consider the desirability of appointing men as well as women inspectors.

*MR. GLADSTONE: The inspection of fish-curing stations forms part of the general work of the Factory Department, and is carried out by the ordinary staff. No special inspectors are appointed for the purpose. The ordinary staff in Scotland consists of nine men inspectors, one lady inspector, and five inspectors' assistants. Special attention has been given recently to the fish-curing stations in Scotland, and the supervision of them will be still further improved by the creation of the new district in North Scotland, which has recently been determined upon, with headquarters in Inverness. I may add that the great majority of the stations, as being workshops, also come under the control of the local authorities in regard to the sanitary provisions of the Factory Act.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cliii., 297.

Steamship Boat Drill.

Mr. CATHCART WASON (Orkney and Shetland): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade if he is aware that the law providing that all passenger and other steamers must carry a certain number of boats, which must be kept in good order, is practically ignored, and that in many cases the boats are not tested more than once a year; and if he will give instructions that on all ships the boats provided for crews and passengers shall be tested by being put into practical working at least once a month.

The PRESIDENT of the BOARD of TRADE (Mr. Lloyd-George (Carnarvon Boroughs): No, Sir, I have no reason to think that the law to which my hon. friend refers is in any way ignored. On the contrary, I am assured that the boats of passenger steamers are inspected before the issue of their passenger certificate, those in the Atlantic passenger trade being inspected every voyage. Vessels engaged in other trades are inspected as frequently as possible, but, without an army of surveyors, it would be impossible for the Board's staff to inspect the boats of all vessels once a month.

Mr. CATHCART WASON: Will the right hon. Gentleman insist on the inspectors seeing that boat drills take place periodically, and that the boats are seaworthy?

Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE: I will bear that in mind.

Brussels Sugar Commission.

Mr. RICHARDSON (Nottingham, S.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether, in view of the fact that Mr. George Martineau is now retiring from his position on the Sugar Commission, under the Sugar Bounties Convention, he will say whether the vacancy will be filled up immediately; and, if so, will care be taken that the appointment made will be that of a person having no connection with sugar refining or planting, so that the interests of the British consumer may be adequately represented.

Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE: There is no intention to make a permanent appointment of an assistant delegate to the Sugar Commission in place of Mr. Martineau. In any arrangements that may be made from time to time having regard to the nature of the business to be transacted by the Commission the interests of the British trader and consumer will be fully borne in mind.

Prices of Sugar.

Sir GILBERT PARKER: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade if he will state what was the price of sugar, raw and refined, duty paid, in London, in March of each of the following years, 1902, 1903, 1904, 1905, and 1906.

Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE: Perhaps the hon. Gentleman will allow me to circulate this with the Answers to unstarred Questions.

Southport Express Accident.

Mr. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether his attention has been called to an accident at Hall Road Station, Southport, in July last, through an electric express from Liverpool running into a stationary train, resulting in the death of twenty passengers and injury to forty-five others; is he aware that some of the passengers on stepping out of the wrecked train, and coming into contact with the live rails, were electrocuted; and will he state how many of the passengers thus lost their lives, and why there is no reference to the electrocution of passengers in this accident in the Board of Trade Report of the inquiry.

Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE: I think my hon. friend has been misinformed as to the facts of this accident. No evidence was produced at the inquiry held on behalf of the Board of Trade that any of the passengers were killed by electrical shock; the Railway Company cannot ascertain that any passenger received any electrical shock, and the Coroner who held the inquests on the passengers who lost their lives, informs me that there is no foundation for the suggestion that any of them were killed by electricity.

MR. WEIR: I think if the right hon. Gentleman inquires further he will find that my information is accurate.

Wheat Prices.

MR. RENDALL (Gloucestershire, Thornbury): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade what the average prices of home-grown and imported wheat were respectively in Germany during the five years ending 31st December, 1905; and what were respectively the average prices of home-grown and imported wheat in the United Kingdom during a similar period.

* MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: The following gives the information asked for so far as it is available:—

Years.	United Kingdom.		Germany.	
	Average Price of English Wheat. Per Quarter.	Average Import Price of Wheat. Per Quarter.	Average Price of Wheat at Berlin Per Quarter.	Average Import Price of Wheat. Per Quarter.
	s. *d.*	*s.* *d.*	*s.* *d.*	*s.* *d.*
1901 - -	26 9	28 4	35 8	28 10
1902 - -	28 1	28 7	35 6	28 6
1903 . -	26 9	29 1	35 1	28 6
1904 -	28 4	30 0	38 0	30 3
1905 - -	29 8	31 0	38 1	30 11

The Berlin price stated may include some imported wheat. (Imported wheat forms about one-third of the German supply.)

Boys in the Postal Service.

DR. MACNAMARA (Camberwell, N.): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General if he can say how many boys under sixteen years of age have been employed in any capacity in the postal and telegraph service during the past ten years; how many of these have been retained in the permanent ranks of the service in any capacity at the close of boyhood; how many have failed to find appointment in the service; whether his Department has in any way assisted these latter to permanent appointments outside the Department; and whether he has any information as to what has become of them.

THE POSTMASTER-GENERAL (Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON, Tower Hamlets, Poplar): I presume the hon. Member's Question refers to the telegraph messengers, who are the only boys under sixteen employed in the Post Office in considerable numbers, though the age of admission of certain other classes falls below sixteen at the inferior limit. To compile the Return asked for would occupy much time and labour. It may perhaps suffice to say that there are now in the Post Office 16,496 telegraph messengers. Of these perhaps half receive permanent posts. Many of the others leave of their own accord, and the rest for whom permanent places cannot be found are required to leave at sixteen, as their prospects of obtaining suitable private employment are much better at that age than they would be if they were retained longer in the service. It must be recollected that the Post Office is under agreement with the War Office and the Admiralty, to reserve half the appointments of postmen and certain other classes for ex-soldiers and ex-sailors. The matter is engaging my serious attention, with a view to see how far other openings can be found for these boys, either in public or private service.

Mr. SLOAN (Belfast, S.): Then do I understand that boys who are not to be permanently employed have to leave at the age of sixteen.

Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON: It is not compulsory, and in some cases they are kept on longer. The reason for the arrangement is, it is found by experience if a boy leaves at sixteen, it is much more easy for him to find a place than if he is not discharged till he is eighteen.

Dr. MACNAMARA: Am I to understand you cannot find permanent employment for more than half the boys?

Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON: I regret to say that is so.

Merioneth Education Rate.

Mr. OSMOND WILLIAMS: I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether an inquiry has yet been held in Merionethshire with regard to the request of the Education Committee of that county to levy a rate over the limit of 2d. allowed by the Education Act, 1902; and, if so, what the result of such inquiry has been.

The PRESIDENT of the LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. John Burns, Battersea): A local inquiry was held on this subject on the 7th instant. Some additional information was found to be necessary, and it was arranged that the accounts should be again examined, and that further information should be supplied. The inspector is awaiting its receipt before making his Report.

Rotherham School Teacher's Grievance.

Mr. PATRICK O'BRIEN (Kilkenny): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education whether he has asked the Rotherham Borough Council, or the Committee, for an explanation of their action in connection with the dismissal of Miss Turner, a pupil-teacher, for refusing to remove an engagement ring from her finger, at the bidding of Miss Hodge, one of the mistresses; what explanation do they offer for their treatment of this young lady; whether he is aware that, when ordered to remove the ring, Miss Turner stated that she was wearing it with the sanction of her parents, and that she did not recognise the authority of anyone else to order her to remove it; whether there is any rule prohibiting the wearing of engagement rings in the pupil-teacher centre, Rotherham; and whether he will recommend that Miss Turner be reinstated in her position, where she gave five years service, or that adequate compensation be given her for the loss of her employment.

The PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY of the BOARD of EDUCATION (Mr. Lough, Islington, W): The President of the Board has written to the Education Authority, asking for any further information and explanation they may desire to offer. He will let the hon. Member know the result of his inquiries.

Half-times at School.

Lord J. JOICEY-CECIL (Lincolnshire, Stamford): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education whether, having regard to the difficulties experienced by the labouring classes in the agricultural districts in providing necessaries for their families owing to their small earnings, he will consider the advisability of authorising the local educational authorities to allow boys of twelve years of age to leave school provided they can get employment at not less than 5s. per week, so as to contribute to the up-keep of the family and complete their education by attending night school.

Mr. LOUGH: Under the Elementary Education Act, 1899, it is permissible for a Local Education Authority to adopt a bý-law allowing half-time exemption to children employed in agriculture on reaching eleven years of age. I do not consider that any extension of this power is necessary at the present time.

Education Bill.

Colonel KENYON-SLANEY (Shropshire, Newport): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education if he will state when the Education Bill will be introduced.

Mr. LOUGH (for Mr. Birrell): I am afraid that I cannot give the date at present.

*Colonel LEGGE (St. George's, Hanover Square): Has the Bill been drafted?

Mr. LOUGH: I have no information to give.

Vote for Commissions.

Mr. CAVENDISH (Derbyshire, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury if he will give particulars of the items composing the grant of £12,659 (Commissions not specifically provided for by Class VII., 1 L), in view of the fact that this sum represents an increase of £5,659 over the sum voted in 1905–6.

The FINANCIAL SECRETARY to TREASURY (Mr. McKenna, Monmouthshire, N.): The Subhead, as the right hon. Gentleman is aware, is a margin on the Vote to provide for expenditure which either cannot be foreseen or for which an estimate in detail cannot be framed at the time when the Estimates are closed; and beyond certain small remanets from expiring Commissions, which it is useful to include in it, the Subhead does not represent particular items. The increase is due to the Estimate for the current year having proved insufficient by the amount of the Supplementary Estimate of £36,000 recently voted. Provision will be required for the Commission on Sea Erosion; the Estimate of £4,000 for the Canal Commission is an uncertain one; and further provision, to an extent which it has not yet been possible to determine, will be required for the Poor Law Commission.

Promised Inquiries.

Mr. J. F. MASON (Windsor): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury if he will give a list of the Royal Commissions, Select Committees, Joint Committees, and Departmental Committees appointed and announced by the Government; and what is the estimated cost of these inquiries during 1906–7.

*Mr. McKENNA: The notice given me by the hon. Member has not been sufficient to enable me to prepare a complete Answer; but so far as I am aware, the Afforestation and Foreshore Commission is the only one which has been announced but has not yet been appointed by the Government. The names of most of the Royal Commissions and Departmental Committees at present appointed will be found in the Estimate for Temporary Commissions, Vote 1, of Class VII, in the Civil Service Estimates for 1906–7. A few, however, have been omitted because the expenditure likely to be incurred by them in 1906–7 appeared to be trifling, if anything at all. These are the War Stores and Motor Car Commissions, the Small Holdings, Agricultural Settlements, Expenditure on Education, and Royal Hibernian Academy Committees. The cost of Commissions and Committees not shown in the Estimate is included in the margin of £12,659 for contingencies provided under Subhead L. The Select Committees which have been appointed to date, are, so far as I am aware, Education (Provision of Meals) Bill, House of Commons Procedure, Butter, Post Office Employés, Police and Sanitary, Kitchen and Refreshment Rooms, Public Petitions, Selection and Public Accounts Committees (the last four being sessional). The cost of these Select Committees is borne on the House of Commons Vote, but it has not been the practice to estimate for them specifically. With regard to that part of the Question which deals with Departmental Committees, I have no information to give the hon. Member, as these Committees may be appointed by the Department concerned without the knowledge of the Treasury, and their expenses are borne on the Department's own Vote.

Cliffords' Inn.

*Mr. LEHMANN (Leicestershire, Market Harborough): I beg to ask Mr. Attorney-General whether the new scheme for dealing with the funds arising out of the sale of Clifford's Inn has been settled, and when will it be made public; and what share of the said funds will be devoted to providing legal education in universities and institutions in London or the provinces.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Sir John Walton, Leeds, S.): The scheme was prepared under the sanction of my predecessor. I understand there have been some difficulties attending its being put into practical operation. The fund is now being administered under a provisional arrrangement.

Edward Wainhouse Charity, Sowerby.

MR. HIGHAM (Yorkshire, W.R., Sowerby): I beg to ask the hon. Member for the Elland Division, as representing the Charity Commissioners, if he is aware that the Edward Wainhouse Charity, left for the benefit of the poor of Sowerby town and vested by the donor in the overseers as trustees, is in the hands of and distributed by the vicars of the township, and will directions be given that in future the distribution shall be made by the overseers, as directed by the will of the testator; and will he explain why the Charity Commissioners are seeking, in opposition to the wishes of the trustees appointed under the will, to amalgamate this charity with others in which they, the trustees, are not interested.

MR. TREVELYAN (Yorkshire, W.R., Elland): The vicars of the ecclesiastical parishes in the township of Sowerby are not entitled to distribute the income of Edward Wainhouse's Charity. The Charity Commissioners are informed that the Charity is now distributed by the Churchwardens of Sowerby. The Overseers of the township are not, in the opinion of the Commissioners, the Trustees of the Charity. Overseers are not now appointed for the area which in 1686 (the date of the founder's will) constituted the township of Sowerby. That area now includes, besides the existing township of Sowerby, parts of Sowerby Bridge, Luddenden Foot, Erringden, Mytholmroyd and Halifax. The Commissioners desire to constitute a body of Trustees, including representatives of the local authorities of the area entitled to the benefit of the Charity and to amalgamate it with other Charities for the same area, so as to save expense and prevent overlapping.

Scottish Churches Disputes.

MR. EUGENE WASON (Clackmannan and Kinross): I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland when the Commission appointed to settle the disputes as between the United Free Church and the Legal Free Church is likely to make a further report as to whom the church buildings, from which the members of the United Free Church were evicted in process of law, belong.

THE SECRETARY FOR SCOTLAND (Mr. SINCLAIR, Forfarshire): The Commission has already issued a list of more than 700 churches which are to be allocated to one or other of the two churches. In the more contentious cases furthur investigation is necessary; and in regard to a considerable number of them, local inquiries. No date therefore can yet be fixed for a further allocation.

Fencing of Deer Forests.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland if he will consider the expediency of issuing a circular to deer forest proprietors in the Highland crofting counties, urging them to fence in their forests in such an effective manner as to prevent the deer from straying on to the adjoining lands, and ravaging the crops thereon.

MR. SINCLAIR: The point will be borne in mind in connection with the amendment of the Crofters Act, which is now being prepared.

East Riding of Cork—Defalcations of Tristram Curry.

MR. WILLIAM O'BRIEN (Cork): I beg to ask Mr. Attorney-General for Ireland if his attention has been drawn to a memorandum from the Southern Law Association intimating their unanimous conclusion, after a full investigation, that there is no ground for suggesting that there has been any contributory negligence on the part of suitors or their solicitors in reference to the defalcations of Tristram Curry, late acting-clerk of the peace for the East Riding of Cork; and that according to the settled practice of the Recorder's Court, there is no rule published or known to the practitioners of the court prescribing that moneys should be lodged in the Recorder's name; why the Recorder has failed to carry out in the East Riding the rule in force in the West Riding, by which the moneys of suitors are lodged in the joint names of the county court judge and his officer; and whether any deficiency remaining after Curry's sureties have discharged their liability will be made good by the official whose duty it was to see that the clerk of the peace properly invested the moneys lodged with him; or what other steps will be taken to indemnify suitors.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. CHERRY, Liverpool

Exchange): My attention has been called to the memorandum referred to in the Question, but I regret to say that I cannot agree with the conclusion arrived at by the Southern Law Association. It appears from their own statement that in the case investigated by them, the conditions of sale, as approved of by the court, directed payment to be made to the clerk of the peace only, and that the solicitor, whose duty it was to make the payment, instead of complying with the conditions, handed the money to another official who had no authority, as far as I can see, to receive it. Under these circumstances, I cannot understand how the Association has arrived at the conclusion that the solicitor in question is free from blame in the matter. The assertion of the Association that there are no rules published prescribing that money should be lodged in the Recorder's name is quite contrary to the fact. The County Court Orders, 1890, provide for payment of trust moneys into a bank in the joint names of the judge and the clerk of the peace. These rules are signed by the present Recorder of Cork, and apply to his court as well as to all county courts in Ireland. If they were strictly observed, defalcations such as have unfortunately taken place, would be impossible. Until the matter is fully investigated, as I hope it will be within a short time, it would be impossible for me to say who is mainly responsible for the irregularities which have apparently prevailed in dealing with money in the Recorder's Court. It has not yet been shown that any of the moneys, which has been embezzled ever reached the hands of the clerk of the peace at all, or that he was aware of its payment to Curry. No blame, therefore, should be attached to him for what has taken place.

Mr. WILLIAM O'BRIEN: Will the Society have an opportunity of being heard?

Mr. CHERRY: I will take an early opportunity of communicating with the Lord Chancellor to see what can be done.

Mr. T. M. HEALY (Louth, N.): The right hon. Gentleman has promised full investigation. Will he undertake that it shall be conducted by a person independent both of the Government and of the local people?

Mr. CHERRY: I cannot say at a moment's notice by whom it will be conducted. I will confer with the Lord Chancellor and see what is best to be done.

Labourer's Cottage at Delvin.

Mr. GINNELL (Westmeath, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will state why the Local Government Board have disallowed the application of Christopher Gillick for a cottage and plot under the Labourers Acts, though approved by the Delvin District Council and by the farmer on whose land the cottage was proposed to to be placed, in view of the fact that the reason alleged, that the applicant is unmarried, has been disregarded in other cases.

The CHIEF SECRETARY for IRELAND (Mr. Bryce, Aberdeen, S.): The hon. Member has been misinformed. The case in question in included in the Provisional Order which was made on the 1st instant.

Colonel Smythe's Westmeath Estates.

Mr. GINNELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if his attention has been called to the prices at which Colonel Smythe of Gaybrook, Westmeath, has offered to sell one of his estates, under the Land Act of 1903; is he aware that three tenants, having refused to sign purchase agreements on the landlord's terms, have since been served with writs, one for two years rents, and one for a hanging gale, no more being due; whether the Estates Commissioners will treat this conduct as duress, and, irrespective of the zones, refuse to sanction any sale of this estate except at fair prices; and whether any steps will be taken to restrain or dissuade Colonel Smythe from taking legal proceedings against these tenants in the meantime.

Mr. BRYCE: I beg to refer to my replies to the hon. Member's Questions of February 26th† and March 6th.‡ I have already stated that, if proceedings for the sale of the estate in question should come before the Estates Commissioners, they will, before sanctioning any advance, make such inquiry into the circumstances of the case as may be within their province as defined by law. I am unable to make any statement as to what action the Commissioners may take in a case which has not yet come before them.

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† See (4) *Debates*, clii., 764.

‡ See (4) *Debates*, cliii., 308.

MR. GINNELL: My Question relates to an entirely different landlord?

MR. BRYCE: But the principle involved may be the same.

Estate Commissioners Forms.

MR. GINNELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland will he request the Estates Commissioners to amend Form E, which they propose to issue to their inspectors, by inserting in it between B and C, a space and query with reference to the tenant's occupation, interest, or amount to which he would be entitled as compensation for disturbance in case of capricious eviction, and to amend their instructions by the addition of a paragraph on this subject; and, if not, to state how it is proposed to protect purchasing tenants from being obliged to buy and pay for what is already by law their own property.

MR. BRYCE: The Estates Commissioners inform me that they do not consider it necessary to amend Form E in the instructions to inspectors by asking any questions as to the tenant's occupation interest, or as to the amount to which he would be entitled as compensation for disturbance in case of capricious eviction. In their opinion, sufficient materials to enable them to form an opinion as to the price of the landlord's interest will be furnished by the answers to questions B, C and D, and by compliance with the directions given in paragraph 37 of the instructions.

Cavan and Leitrim Railway.

MR. DOLAN (Leitrim, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he has observed that, in the estimates of expenditure under the Irish Development Grant Fund, £12,000 is allocated towards extensions of the Cavan and Leitrim Railway; whether he is aware that the Bill submitted by the Cavan and Leitrim Railway Company has been unanimously rejected by the Leitrim County Council, and that the promoters have accordingly abandoned the Bill; and will he see that no further useless expenditure from the Development Grant Fund is incurred in connection with this rejected scheme.

MR. BRYCE. This matter is receiving the consideration of His Majesty's Government. I am not at present prepared to make any statement on the subject, beyond the expression of my regret that so many difficulties seem to have arisen.

Lisburn Labourers' Cottage Scheme.

MR. SLOAN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he can state the time intervening between the application for a labourer's cottage in the Lisburn district until the same has been built and ready for occupation, as compared with a similar transaction in the Antrim district; and whether, in view of the delay in providing these houses, he will take steps to insist on the Antrim Rural District Council having the work completed forthwith.

MR. BRYCE: The Local Government Board are informed that in the case of the Lisburn Rural District, as a rule, a period of not more than one and a half years elapses between the receipt of a representation for labourers' cottages and the completion of the building of the cottages. In the case of the Antrim Rural District, a considerable delay occurred in connection with the first scheme, because of the refusal of the Council to build cottages for fishermen; and the time which elapsed between the date of the original application, and the dates of the completion of the cottages was from three to four years. The Local Government Board are informed that the cottages for which a second scheme was formulated in 1904 will be completed this year. If, however, further delay should occur, the Board will take such action as may be possible to expedite the completion of the cottages.

Donagh Nationalist Flute Band.

MR. T. L. CORBETT: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that on February 7th the Donagh Nationalist Flute Band went to Middleton, County Armagh, returning at midnight, accompanied by a crowd, many of whom were intoxicated, and insisted, against the request of the police, in going through the village of Glasslough, and breaking the windows of Protestants, and also fired several shots at the house of a Protestant, and badly wounded the sergeant of police; and whether he will say what steps he intends taking to protect the lives and property of the peaceful inhabitants of Glasslough in the future.

MR. BRYCE: The incident in question is the subject of proceedings which are pending at petty sessions, and it would be undesirable and contrary to practice to make any statement in the matter while the proceedings are *sub judice.*

Cloncah Police.

MR. JOHN ROCHE (Galway, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that while the extra police were stationed at Cloncah, County Galway, several massive iron gates were stolen off the lands, also a heavy stone trough that was in use in the yard of the house the police were stationed in; and what steps will be taken by the present Government for the recovery of the stolen property.

MR. BRYCE: I am informed by the police authorities that no complaint was made to the local police of any theft in this case. The police, however, subsequently heard incidentally that a pair of old iron gates were missing from the lands in question, whereupon they made search for them, but failed to trace them. They have ascertained that the stone trough referred to was presented by the owner to his herd, in whose possession it remains. The extra police had left Cloncah at the date of the disappearance of the gates.

Lowe Estate, Limerick.

MR. LUNDON (Limerick, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland is he aware that the Lowe estate around Galbally, county Limerick, is being sold to the tenants; can he say whether the town tenants in Galbally are included in the sale; and how far matters have so far progressed with both rural and town tenants.

MR. BRYCE: The Estates Commissioners inform me that an orignating application in respect of the estate of Lieut-Colonel J. M. Lowe has been lodged with them. The estate to be sold comprises the village of Lowes' Town, but does not appear to include the village of Galbally.

Croker Estate, Limerick.

MR. LUNDON: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he is aware that negotiations for sale to the tenants are in progress on the Croker estate, in the townlands of Moohane, Cahircourtney, Rawleighstown and Ballinagarde, in the county of Limerick; can he say whether in these negotiations, the holding of Michael Power, son of the late Richard Power, evicted in June 1890, is included; can he say whether Mr. Courteney Croker and the receiver, Mr. John B. Barrington, have signified their willingness to the reinstatement of Michael Power; is he aware that a planter named Timothy Kirby holds the farm of Michael Power, and that Timothy Kirby has expressed his willingness to leave the farm, provided that he gets another farm on the untenanted lands on the estate, the evicted farm of the late Morgan Hayes excepted; and, if so, will the Estates Commissioners undertake, under these circumstances, to reinstate Michael Power in his farm.

MR. BRYCE: The Estates Commissioners inform me that an originating application in repect of the sale of this estate has been recently lodged with them. Timothy Kirby appears on the shedule of of tenancies lodged, as tenant of a farm which the Commissioners understand was formerly occupied by Richard Power deceased. No purchase agreement has yet been lodged for this holding. Application for reinstatement has been made by by Michael Power, the son of Richard Power, and the Commissioners will make inquiries and endeavour to effect an arrangement between Kirby, the present occupier, and Michael Power.

Kilmallock Labourers' Cottage Scheme.

MR. LUNDON: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland can he say whether it is owing to the action of the Local Government Board, or to what other agency, the present scheme of labourers' cottages being built in the Kilmallock rural district has been so long without coming to completion; how many cottages and plots for labourers have been approved of in the Cahirconney electoral division; under what method of procedure are the tenancies on the O'Grady property being transferred from the landlord to the tenants, and what progress has been made with the sales; and will he see that the labourers' plots are contracted for forthwith, so as to afford immediate employment, and give the labourers an opportunity of tilling the plots before it runs too late in the spring.

MR. BRYCE: The Local Government Board have pressed forward the scheme referred to as much as possible, but there has been delay on the part of the rural district council in carrying out its details. The erection of ten new cottages, and the acquisition of one existing cottage in Cahirconney electoral division have been authorised. The Local Government Board have no information as to the O'Grady property. With regard to the final inquiry, I am advised that, pending the legal acquisition of the plots, it is open to the rural district council to enter upon the lands which it is proposed to acquire, provided that they obtain permission from the owners and occupiers.

Goodbody Estate, Athenry.

MR. DUFFY (Galway, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will give the names and qualifications of the tenants who have got new holdings on the Goodbody estate, near Athenry; how many of the former occupying tenants on the same property made application for additional land; and will he state what apportionment of the land was made amongst them.

MR. BRYCE: The Estates Commissioners inform me that the purchase by them of a portion of this estate has not yet been completed. Provisional arrangements, however, have been made for the disposal of the untenanted land to twenty-four purchasers, all of whom are tenants on the estate, with the exception of one, who is the son of a tenant. The Commissioners do not consider it desirable to make any statement as to the names of the proposed purchasers or the apportionment of the lands among them until the sale is completed.

MR. DUFFY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction for Ireland recently purchased the Goodbody estate, near Athenry; what was the extent and area of this property, how much of it has been retained by the Department of Agriculture, and what quantity of it has been handed over to the Estate Commissioners, firstly, as untenanted land, and secondly, as holdings in the possession of agricultural tenants.

MR. BRYCE: The Department of Agriculture have recently purchased the estate, which comprised 2,305 acres. The Department have retained for their own purposes, 740 acres, and proceedings are being taken for the sale by them to the Estate Commissioners of the remaining 1,565 acres. Of the latter quantity, 1,064½ acres are untenanted, and 500½ acres are tenanted.

MR. DUFFY: Will the right hon. Gentleman bear in mind the claims of the evicted tenant on this property? Will he suggest to the Estates Commissioners the desirability of providing for this man?

MR. BRYCE promised to forward any communication the hon. Member might send him to the Commissioners.

Athenry Labourers' Cottages Scheme.

MR. DUFFY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland how many labourers' cottages have been built at Caherown and Knockaneglass, Athenry, within the past two years; what was the price paid for each site; who was the Local Government Board arbitrator appointed to assess the price; and if any claims have reached the Local Government Board on behalf of persons laying claim to a portion of the sites so acquired.

MR. BRYCE: Four labourers' cottages have been built at Caherown, but none at Knockaneglass. The site at Caherown, which consisted of two acres of land near Athenry railway station, was considered by the arbitrator to possess exceptional value as a building site. The total compensation awarded to owner, lessee, and grazing tenant, was £311 18s. 0d. The arbitrator was Mr. J. H. Ryan, C. E. The Answer to the final inquiry is in the negative.

Catherown Estate, Athenry.

MR. DUFFY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether negotiations are on foot by the Estate Commissioners for the purchase of the Caherown estate, near Athenry; and, if so, will steps be taken to ascertain the requirements of the people of Athenry for accommodation land before any final allocation is made.

MR. BRYCE: The Estates Commissioners inform me that they are not able to trace any proceedings in their office in respect of the Caherown Estate, near Athenry, and have no information in regard to any negotiations for the sale of the estate.

Ballyhaise Disturbances.

MR. LONSDALE (Armagh, Mid.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the fact that on Sunday the 11th February, a mob of 300 persons, headed by Mr. Thomas Smith, J.P., chairman of the Cavan Rural District Council, Mr. Fitzpatrick, D.C., and Joseph Mulligan, an evicted tenant, marched on to the farm of Peter Brady, near Ballyhaise, tore down fences and held a meeting, at which threats were uttered against Brady; what steps have been taken against those who organised these proceedings; and whether it is intended to remove Mr. Thomas Smith from the office of justice of the peace.

MR. VINCENT KENNEDY (Cavan, W.): May I ask whether, in view of the fact that these men are at present undergoing imprisonment, and the object of the Question is vexatious and aggravating, you, Mr. Speaker, will rule it out of order?

*MR. SPEAKER: I am afraid I cannot rule a Question out of order because it is aggravating and vexatious. It is open to the Minister to say whether or not he will answer it.

MR. BRYCE: The attention of the Government has been called to this matter by proceedings in the Land Judge's Court which resulted in an order by the learned Judge for the attachment of the persons named in the Question. It has not been considered necessary that proceedings at the instance of the police should be taken in the case. The Lord Chancellor informs me that the matter referred to has not been brought to his notice.

Castlepollard Shooting Incident.

MR. LONDSDALE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he has received particulars of a shooting incident in the Castlepollard district of county Westmeath; is he aware that the house of a man named Clinton was fired into; and have any arrests been made in connection with this matter?

MR. BRYCE: I am informed that on the 2nd inst. a gun shot was fired into the house of Patrick Clinton, who had been engaged in litigation with a neighbour as to a debt for money. An arrest was subsequently made by the police, but the accused was discharged by the magistrates.

Phœnix Park, Dublin.

MR. T. M. HEALY: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury when the Government expect to throw open to the public the recent additions to the Phœnix Park; and whether there would be any difficulty in appropriating further sums from the amount realised from quit rents and woods and forests in Ireland to the improvement and beautification of the new addition.

MR. McKENNA: The additional land referred to was acquired with a view not to increasing the area of the Phœnix Park but to preserving its existing amenities. It is separated from the Park by a public road and a large part of it in addition by an unbridged river. I am not prepared to authorise its inclusion in the Park, as I am informed that the expense of such a measure would be prohibitive. It would not be in accordance with the provisions of the Crown Lands Acts to appropriate the Crown Revenues collected by the Commissioners of Woods in Ireland to the purposes referred to in the Question.

Queen's College, Belfast.

MR. T. M. HEALY: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury if the agreement to provide further funds for the Belfast Queen's College is contained in any letter or minute in writing; and can he give the date of the minute or letter, and the name of the Minister asssenting to or responsible for the same.

MR. McKENNA : The quotation which I read out in my Answer to the hon. Member for Waterford on Tuesday† was taken from a letter dated the 28th January, 1893, and addressed to the Rev. T. Hamilton, D.D., Queen's College, Belfast. The letter was written by direction of and signed by Sir John Hibbert, who was then Financial Secretary to the Treasury.

Irish Financial Relations.

MR. JOHN O'CONNOR (Kildare, N.) : I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether it is the custom in estimating the amount of the expenditure upon Imperial services in Ireland to charge such expenditure against the Irish Revenue Account; and whether he is aware that the Royal Commission on Financial Relations reported that no portion of the Imperial expenditure could, in their view, be regarded as local or as a set-off to excessive taxation (page 25 of Report), and that to make a charge for Irish purposes would be to do what the constitution does not sanction (page 103); and, if so, will he state by what authority such a custom is sanctioned, and at what date such a custom began.

MR. McKENNA: In the Financial Relations Returns Ireland is not charged with the expenditure on any Imperial service. If the Hon. Member will refer to the Annual Returns he will find that the total expenditure is classified therein under the four heads of "English Services," "Scottish Services," "Irish Services," and "General Services." The last mentioned heading includes the charges for the National Debt, the Army and Navy, the Diplomatic, Consular, and Colonial Services, and other services which may be called "Imperial" in the sense that they are carried on for the benefit of the United Kingdom as a whole. No part of that expenditure is set down against Ireland. The passages which the Hon. Member quotes from the Report of the Financial Relations Commission do not occur in the General Report which was signed by eleven of the thirteen members, but in two Supplementary Reports, one of which was signed by five, and the other by three of the members. It would be impossible for His Majesty's Government to accept the view of those members that, in considering the burden of taxation upon Ireland, no regard is to be paid to the amount of the charge for purely Irish services which is defrayed out of State revenues. The Act of Union contemplated that the total expenditure of the United Kingdom should be "defrayed indiscriminately by equal taxes imposed on the same articles in each country," subject only to such particular abatements and exemptions in Ireland or Scotland as circumstances might require. That is the system now in force. No constitutional rule is infringed if, in considering the financial position of Ireland, we take account of the fact that, since the date of the Union, it has become the practice to devote large sums out of the revenues raised by the State to the assistance of local authorities, to contributions to the cost of education, and to other services of local application; and that the sums thus supplied in the three countries are not in the same proportions as their contributions to revenue. That method has been followed with the sanction of this House since 1890, when a Select Committee was appointed to consider the equity of the financial relations of the three countries, with regard not only to their contributions to revenue, but also to their shares in expenditure.

Midland Great Western Company and the Royal Canal.

MR. GINNELL: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade, having regard to the requirements of Section 36 of the Act 8th and 9th Victoria, chapter 119, and the fact that General Hutchinson and Major Marindin, inspectors of the Board of Trade, have both reported the Midland Great Western Railway Company as having failed to discharge its duty of maintaining, upholding, and preserving the Royal Canal for the purpose of navigation, and specified certain works as essential to the maintenance of the canal and to the discharge of the company's statutory obligations, and that the non-execution of these works is a serious loss to many, whether the Board of Trade will require the Midland Great Western Railway Company forthwith to execute, not improvements, but the works of restoration and maintenance essential to put the Royal Canal in proper navigable order, in accordance with the statute, the bye-laws made thereunder, and the reports of the inspectors.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cliii., 1111.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: The Board of Trade have no power either under the section referred to by the hon. Member or otherwise to take the action suggested.

Emigration from Port Galway.

MR. CHARLES DEVLIN (Galway): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade if he will state the number of emigrants who sailed from the Port of Galway for the United States during the year ending 31st December, 1905; and what steamship lines are engaged in this service from Galway.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: According to the passenger lists furnished to this Department, the number of passengers who left the Port of Galway for the United States in 1905 was 297. All these were steerage passengers, and they were conveyed by vessels belonging to the Allan Line.

Committee of Inquiry for South Africa.

SIR HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury if he is yet in a position to announce the names of the Committee of Inquiry which is to proceed to South Africa, or the terms of the reference for its guidance.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN, Stirling Burghs): No, Sir, I am not in a position to state the names of the Committee to-day, but I hope to do so shortly.

SIR HOWARD VINCENT: Will this day week be convenient?

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Any day will be convenient on which I am able to give the names.

SIR GILBERT PARKER: Will the terms of reference also be communicated to the House?

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Yes, but I cannot say if they can be given at the same time as the names.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR (City of London) asked for the ruling of the Chair on a point which, he said, had been long in some doubt and which it would be desirable to clear up, once and for all. It was whether Ways and Means counted as business in Supply.

*MR. SPEAKER: I have no doubt that Committee of Ways and Means, when put down for a purpose, such as that for which it is put down to-day, is business of Supply. But that is not the case when Committee of Ways and Means is taken as the first order, as for the Budget. The day on which that is done could not be counted in the allotted days. When Supply stands first and Committee of Ways and Means is put down for the purpose of moving certain Resolutions, in my opinion it comes within Standing Order 15 and could be taken without invalidating the day as an allotted day.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR said he was glad to hear that ruling. He wished to ask the Leader of the House, on the basis of that ruling, whether he proposed to take anything after 12 o'clock except the Resolution in Ways and Means, if the 12 o'clock rule was suspended according to the notice given by the right hon. Gentleman.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN reminded the Prime Minister that in giving notice of his Motion yesterday he stated the suspension would be a pure formality and would be only for the purpose of the Resolution.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN said that since giving his notice he had ascertained that it had been ruled on one or two occasions that Committee of Ways and Means might be regarded as part of the business of Supply, and that view was in conformity with the ruling just given from the Chair. That vitiated the reason he gave yesterday for giving notice of a Motion to suspend the 12 o'clock rule, and he could not say any longer that it was merely for the purpose he named. He did hope to get Votes A and 1 to-night.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR said he was very unwilling to press the doctrine of the honourable understanding, but he hoped the right hon. Gentleman would bear in mind that the belief obtained in the House that the suspension was for taking only a purely formal stage. He would ask whether the right hon. Gentleman could not make it one of the instructions to the Committee now dealing with the question of procedure to consider, with a view to its abolition, this particular stage which made a Resolution in Ways and Means necessary on which to found the Consolidated Fund Bill. He spoke, he said, on this subject with the more freedom as he was now in opposition and likely to remain so; therefore it could not be suggested he had other motives behind. He thought the stage was a survival which ought to be abolished. He desired further to ask what business would be taken next week.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN said he had no doubt that the question was well within the scope of the Committee's inquiry, and no doubt it would come under consideration. He had been pressed not to go beyond 12 o'clock, and as he had put down his notice for the suspension of the rule on a somewhat wrong ground, he would not insist on going beyond 12 o'clock. The business on Monday would be, if Votes A and I of the Army Estimates were obtained to-night, Report of the Navy and Army Votes, Ways and Means Report, and the First Reading of the Consolidated Fund Bill. On Tuesday certain Bills would be introduced, including the Merchant Shipping Bill. On Wednesday the Second Reading of the Consolidated Fund Bill would be taken, and on Thursday he should endeavour to get the Speaker out of the Chair on the Civil Service Estimates.

*MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER pointed out that very important changes of policy had been adumbrated in the statement of the Secretary for War, and unless they could take a general discussion on this Vote they would not be able to debate these questions of policy until the end of the session.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: General discussions on Army matters are sometimes taken on other Votes by arrangement.

MR. WYNDHAM (Dover): Is it not the case that general discussions on Army policy can only be raised on the Vote for the salary of the Secretary for War?

*MR. SPEAKER: Arrangements have very often been made with the consent of the Chair to continue the general discussion which takes place on Vote A on some subsequent Vote.

NEW MEMBER SWORN.

Arthur Clavell Salter, esquire, K.C., for the County of Hants (Northern or Basingstoke Division).

HOUSE OF COMMONS (PROCEDURE).

Ordered, That a Message be sent to the Lords to request that their Lordships will be pleased to give leave to the Viscount Selby to attend to be examined as a witness before the Select Committee on House of Commons (Procedure).—(*Sir Henry Fowler.*)

NEW BILLS.

LOCAL AUTHORITIES (TAXATION AND PURCHASE OF LAND) BILL.

"To provide for the Taxation and Purchase of Land by Local Authorities," presented by Dr. Macnamara; supported by Mr. Bell, Mr. Broadhurst, Mr. Cremer, Mr. Crooks, Mr. Keir Hardie, Mr. Harwood, Mr. Levy, Mr. Shackleton, Mr. Harvey, Mr. John Robertson, and Mr. Snowden; to be read a second time upon Thursday, 29th March, and to be printed. [Bill 102.]

MINES, ETC. (NATIONALISATION) BILL.

"To provide for the Nationalisation of of Mines, Canals, Railways, and Tramways," presented by Mr. Thorne; supported by Mr. Walsh, Mr. Seddon, Mr. John Williams, Mr. Clynes, Mr. Jowett, Mr. George Roberts, Mr. James Parker, and Mr. Hudson; to be read a second time upon Friday, 27th April, and to be printed. [Bill 103.]

HOUSING OF THE WORKING CLASSES, ETC., BILL.

"To amend the Law relating to the Housing of the Working Classes, to amend the Law of Rating, and to establish Fair Rent Courts," presented by Mr. Steadman; supported by Mr. Alden, Mr. Bell, Mr. J. H. Bethell, Mr. Bowerman, Mr. Nannetti, Mr. John Johnson, Mr. Thorne, and Mr. Wiles; to be read a second time upon Thursday, 5th April, and to be printed. [Bill 104.]

LEASEHOLD ENFRANCHISEMENT BILL.

"To provide for the Enfranchisement of Leaseholds," presented by Mr. Maclean; supported by Mr. Evans, Mr. Rowlands, Mr. Gooch, Mr. Simon, and Jenkins; to be read a second time upon Thursday, 5th April, and to be printed. [Bill 105.]

SUPPLY [2nd Allotted Day.]

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. Emmott (Oldham) in the Chair.]

ARMY ESTIMATES 1906-7.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a number of Land Forces, not exceeding 204,100, all ranks, be maintained for Service of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland at home and Abroad, excluding His Majesty's Indian Possessions, during the year ending on 31st day of March, 1907."

Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN (Worcestershire, E): I rise in response to the invitation—I might almost say challenge—of the Chancellor of the Exchequer to put a Question. I am anxious to ascertain the total amount involved by the decision of His Majesty's Government to pay the local trades union rate of wages in all Government establishments. The right hon. Gentleman caused me to be informed that the suggestion that it was the decision of the Government to pay local trade union rates of wages was neither an accurate nor an adequate statement of the policy of the Government, and he referred me to statements made by the Secretary of State for War and the Secretary to the Admiralty to a deputation which waited on them.† The only statement I have had an opportunity of hearing was one by the Secretary to the Admiralty, who did not pretend to explain fully the intentions of the Government.

The CHAIRMAN: The right hon. Gentleman appears to me to be travelling far beyond the question before the Committee. He is only entitled to deal with it so far as the Army Estimates are concerned.

Mr. McCRAE (Edinburgh, E.) rose to a point of order. Was it not a fact that upon this Vote the discussion was confined to the number of men? Questions of finance could not be raised till later on.

The CHAIRMAN: There is generally a wide discussion on this Vote.

Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: It is very inconvenient to have to raise this question now. If I had received the ordinary courtesy which Ministers usually show when civil questions are asked, it would not be necessary to repeat the Question now.

Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Civil!

Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: Yes. If the right hon. Gentleman looks at the Question he will not be able to suggest there is anything uncivil or improper in it.

Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Surely all Questions are civil. Will the right hon. Gentleman say which of the Ministers has been guilty of discourtesy, in order that he may have an opportunity of apologising?

Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: The Chancellor of the Exchequer refused to reply to a Question which asked for information given to other people outside this House in respect of a matter of public policy.

Mr. ASQUITH: Am I the person incriminated?

Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: Yes.

Mr. ASQUITH said he believed he referred the right hon. Gentleman to the full statement made by the Secretary of State for War on the Army Estimates.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cliii., 1103.

That appeared to him to cover the whole ground, but if any further information were needed he would try to give it.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said he had not been referred to any statement by the Secretary of State in that House, but to statements made to a deputation.

MR. ASQUITH: That was before the Secretary of State made his statement.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: Here is the right hon. Gentleman's own Answer, dated March 13th.†

MR. ASQUITH: If that is so, I apologise; but I certainly thought I referred the right hon. Gentleman to the full and authoritative statement made by the Secretary for War. Nothing was further from my mind than to be guilty of any discourtesy.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN thanked the right hon. Gentleman, and said that if he was to understand that a full statement had been made in the House he had no cause for complaint. He only regretted he had not succeeded in understanding the right hon. Gentleman.

MAJOR SEELY (Liverpool, Abercromby) moved to reduce the Vote by 10,000 men. He said that he might be excused for again trespassing on the time of the Committee, seeing that he had, with others, been concerned for some years in moving for a reduction of the *personnel* of the Army at a time when such a reduction was more unpopular than it should be in this House of Commons, the vast majority of whose Members had been pledged to economy. He would endeavour to be as brief as possible in stating his reasons for moving the reduction of the establishment. They had again and again urged that it was not possible to reduce expenditure without reducing the number of men. Let them look back on the history of the Army for the last thirty years. Secretaries of State, both Liberal and Conservative, had again and again pledged themselves to economy and had endeavoured to effect it without reducing the *personnel*, but they had failed. Not only was it impossible to reduce expenditure without reducing the *personnel*, but the expenditure must increase. In 1872, when Mr. Cardwell introduced his great scheme, the cost per year of a soldier was £111. Now it had risen by steady gradation to £146, an increase of 30 per cent. in thirty odd years. The circumstances of trade tended to increase the cost of a voluntarily recruited army. In his interesting statement, the Secretary for War had pointed out that America had a small army, but he showed how great was its cost, and in comparing the British Army with foreign armies it was well to turn one's eyes to those which were recruited by voluntary enlistment. The expenditure per man in the American army was nearer £400 than £300 a year, and if they examined the various causes which made living more expensive in the United States, they could not but realise that the increase of the expenditure must go on. Therefore if they were to fulfil their pledges to reduce expenditure they must seek to bring it about by reducing the *personnel*.

The great heads of expenditure were the Army, the Navy, the Civil Service, and education. The Navy could not be sensibly reduced according to His Majesty's present advisers. Those who believed that the supremacy of the Navy was more vital than the supremacy of the Army, as most of them did, saw a danger, that if this reduction of the Army was not made the expenditure on the Navy might be dangerously reduced by a justly indignant nation. From the Navy they could not expect any great reduction. In the Civil Service no great reductions were likely. On the contrary they saw proposals to increase the expenditure on postmen, and, indeed, on all civil servants. In connection with education they had agreed to feed hungry school children. Therefore if they were to reduce expenditure greatly they must reduce it on the Army. He was reminded that a Resolution had been passed to increase expenditure by hon. Members paying themselves. The present Government and their supporters had been returned as a Party pledged to economy, and if the first visible result of the first session was a proposal to maintain the Navy expenditure at or near its present height, to increase the cost of the Civil Service, to increase pensions, and to pay Members of

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† See (4) *Debates*, cliii., 1103.

Parliament £300 a year each, they would be justly condemned. Therefore, the Committee would realise that it was in no hostile spirit to the right hon. Gentleman, whose views so entirely coincided with those urged by Ministerialists generally on the matter of economy, that they pressed all they could for a favourable statement. He did not move this reduction of 10,000 men merely for the purpose of providing a peg on which to hang a discussion. In regard to numbers the Amendment meant what it said, but it was perfectly certain that they could not reduce the Army by 10,000 in this financial year without causing the gravest difficulties as to contracts which had been entered into and arrangements which had been made with men already recruited. The Committee, in discussing the Army Estimates, was always in an awkward position. It was like an audit department which was auditing accounts after the expenditure had been discussed. Therefore the only sensible way to look at discussions in Committee when Amendments were moved calling for great reductions in money or men was to regard them as demands from the Committee—if the Committee were to agree — that the number of men or the amount of money should be taken off the Estimates in the succeeding year. In looking through the debates of the last thirty years he found that again and again when reductions of this kind were moved the representative of the Government of the day had replied, "We cannot do it this year." Admitting that the proposed reduction could not be made this year, what he and his friends asked was that the Government would give a promise to do it next year. He would state the reasons why he thought the reduction was imperative. They must reduce the Army, firstly, because they could not afford to maintain the establishment. The House of Commons would not give the money, and the country would not give the men. Secondly, because in endeavouring to maintain an establishment for which there was neither money nor men sufficient they had persisted in a cheese-paring policy which had involved them in every department of the Army for years past in a course which meant "spoiling the ship for the sake of a ha'porth of tar." It was a matter of common knowledge that the Secretary of State had the greatest difficulty in each successive year filling up the regiments with men of the necessary character and stamina for life in tropical climates. He did not know how many the present Secretary of State could get in the coming year. It might or might not be a bumper year. But those who took an interest in the Army knew that again and again men had been enlisted who were not fit to be enlisted, who were nothing but an expense to the State. That was what was meant when they spoke of "a paper Army." A paper Army the British Army had always to a certain extent been, and when a crash came, as in 1900, they discovered that there were vast numbers at home who were in no sense fitted to serve in a field Army because they were not sufficiently trained, because great numbers had been enlisted under age, and because they would never, or at all events for many years, become efficient soldiers. Questions were constantly being asked in the House why So-and-so, a Crimean or Afghan veteran, was allowed to die in the workhouse. It was because his pension was not large enough to live upon. Such things should not be. In an earlier debate it was urged that the War Office should be model employers, and the Secretary of State gave a generous reply to the demand. But if they were going to be model employers to the men in the arsenals, they must also be model employers to the men who fought our battles. In no other country would men who had served their country to the best of their ability, and who had suffered in health, be allowed to die in workhouses. The pension scheme must be increased and so the cost must rise. At Tidworth barracks there was no cricket ground, no gymnasium, and no church available for the men. The Secretary of State might say that such minor matters did not affect the question of efficiency. But they did, for if the authorities did not treat officers and men properly they would not get efficient service. Therefore the cost per man must increase. In the vital matter of war materials they were able to say with sorrow about a year ago what he was thankful they could not say now, that our guns were the most obsolete in the world. The reason given for this was that the War Office could not get money from the Treasury. The Treasury had now provided money for proper guns. It was for these reasons he urged that there should be a reduction in the *personnel* of the Army. That was the only way to effect economy. He had always contended that the only method was to reduce the Regular Infantry of the Line in these islands. The Cardwell system proposed an equal number of men abroad and at home. If they were going to reduce the Army, it was perfectly true that they might reduce it abroad, but the experience of thirty years had shown that although they might say they would reduce it, public clamour might prevent them from reducing it. People realised that our hold on India involved the very living of Lancashire, and, indeed, most of this country, and therefore they cried out when it was proposed greatly to reduce the foreign garrisons. The Army at home was in a different category. A new school of thought had arisen of which the right hon. Gentleman was a disciple. Those who belonged to that school believed that this country could not be invaded, and that being so, the Army was not wanted for the purpose for which Mr. Cardwell and his advisers wanted it, namely, to defend the country from invasion. They need not argue the question of invasion, for, after all, those who believed that invasion was impossible, generally also believed that the Volunteers should be the people to defend the country. There was general agreement among all Members of the House that the Regular Army was not required to repel invasion, because it would be a most expensive method of doing it. There was, therefore, good reason for reducing the Estimates for infantry in these islands. It was not necessary to have battalions at home to provide foreign battalions with drafts. He often wondered why they went to the expense of adding fourteen battalions to the Regular Infantry of the Line. Those who liked the Cardwell system must see that it spoiled the symmetry of the scheme. It was quite uneconomic and opposed to Mr. Cardwell's own view. He had indicated the methods which in his judgment it would be wise to adopt in order to effect this economy, but he did not care much how the reduction was brought about provided it was made. They had been returned to reduce expenditure on the Army, and they must do it, and do it next year. Someone might say it was unpatriotic to propose to reduce the strength of the Regular Army, but he denied that. He did not believe in that vicarious patriotism which consisted in getting other people "to do our fighting for us whilst we stayed at home." That might be necessary, but it was not patriotic, and they must economise for the sake of the finances of the country. He was persuaded that it was not by exaggerated Estimates or a bloated establishment that they would bring about a reduction, but by a wise economy, and by inculcating in our countrymen a spirit of personal sacrifice. He begged to move the reduction standing in his name.

*Sir CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean), in seconding the Amendment, said for the past four years he had taken part in discussions on a proposed reduction of this kind. The hon. and gallant Member for Liverpool had done him the honour of seconding a similar Motion, and he remembered that on one occasion they had the support of the Secretary of State for War upon the grounds upon which they were now supporting this reduction. Perhaps upon this occasion the Committee would excuse him from saying what he had already said publicly in regard to his right hon. friend's services to the State, and his fitness for the high office which he now held. He regretted, however, that at the beginning of his speech the other day the Secretary of State for War should have drawn a too satisfactory picture of our expenditure, and that he should have made a comparison with Germany which would not bear investigation. His right hon. friend had said—

> "It may assuage our grief that we do not stand alone. German military expenditure is £31,000,000 as against our £30,000,000 a year.'

He wished to point out that the expenditure of the British Empire on land forces was not £30,000,000 but nearly £60,000,000 per year, and even under this Vote and the Vote that followed for pay, they would find expenditure outside the £30,000,000 in the form of appropriations-in-aid. The cost of the land forces of the British Empire was double the cost of the land forces of Germany. They had just passed the turn, and there was now a slight improvement, but the defence of the

British Empire has very recently cost £100,000,000 a year in peace, of which the land forces cost £60,000,000 and the sea forces £40,000,000. At this moment the land forces were still at about that figure, although next year they might be below it. Even next year at the best he ventured to say that they would get very little change indeed out of £60,000,000 sterling for the land forces. Some hon. Members might find a difficulty in following those figures. There were £30,250,000 for home Votes and allowances from other Departments, with repayments from India and appropriations-in-aid deducted. There was a large number of other appropriations-in-aid besides those from India. There was the "surplus from the war" which the Secretary of State for War would lose next year, and which the £250,000,000 of debt due to lavish and wasteful expenditure had given to the War Office, and which they had got back by selling things at a knock-out price. That had to be allowed for. On the Civil Service Estimates there were £2,000,000 for troops in Uganda and West Africa and other Protectorates, which were military forces organised in battalions and batteries, without counting military police, and which in Germany or in any other country would be on the War Office Vote. For Uganda and West Africa Frontier Force and the like there were £2,000,000 charged on the Civil Service Estimates. Therefore, the Vote under discussion ought to be larger by those charges. This Vote was of course reduced by the garrisons at Halifax and other places, the cost of which was now defrayed by self-governing Colonies. The military expenditure of India was now set permanently at £21,000,000, and this together with the charges for the Crown Colonies and for the self-governing colonies must be considered in any comparison between what we spent and what the German Empire spent. There was also loan money, and we spent not £30,000,000, but nearly £60,000,000 on land forces in profound peace in an Empire which was an Empire of the sea, the command of which was necessary to us. Our power was estimated by foreign Powers not in proportion to our Army strength, but in proportion to the strength of our Fleet. It was the Fleet which made us feared in war and supported our diplomacy in peace Our military services were peculiarly special and necessary, but they were not of a scale and character which justified an Imperial expenditure of £60,000,000 upon the land forces of the Crown. He thought he had carried the Committee with him as far as that matter was concerned. He had not gone so much into detail, but he could assure the Committee that what he had stated would bear investigation. He was aware that the reaching of £60,000,000 depended upon the loan money, and if the loan expenditure in this House was to drop from £3,500,000 to £1,000,000 with a view to its becoming extinct, no doubt the sum of £60,000,000 would not be reached; it would be about £57,000,000. He wished to point out that he had guarded against the mistake which was sometimes made of counting the loan money twice over. He thought there was a general agreement that the expenditure was enormous, and that it was difficult to justify expenditure upon the land forces of the Crown so enormously in excess of the expenditure upon the Fleet. The present Government had accepted Lord Kitchener's policy, and the expenditure in India was now £21,000,000 sterling, a new figure which had risen from £17,000,000 sterling. He was aware that this expenditure showed a slight reduction, but it had been reduced in less proportion than the expenditure upon the Fleet since the adoption of the blue-water view. Many hon. Members had now come over to the blue-water view and had accepted the doctrine of the primacy of the Fleet. Since that time the reduction had been much larger on the Fleet than on the land forces, and there was a danger that if they did not prune down their expenditure upon the land forces an impatient country might fall upon the easiest prey. He thoroughly associated himself with the words of his hon. friend as to the danger and the forgetfulness of practising economy; he believed it would have a fatal repercussion on the numbers of the Fleet. When the enormous cost of the land forces was spoken of there were some who said we were a voluntary country and that conscription accounted for the cheapness of the land forces of Germany in comparison with those of this country. But that question had been threshed out in this House and it had been demonstrated that it did not account for it. Sir Michael

Hicks-Beach, as he then was, had said that conscription entered into the account, but that it was not the main item of the account, and that the argument was a fallacious one. With that they all agreed. On behalf of the late Government another Chancellor of the Exchequer, whose death every Member of the House regretted, Mr. Ritchie, twice assured the House in the most solemn way that a large reduction was to take place on this Vote; that it would take the only possible form that it could take, namely, a reduction of the regular infantry of the land forces kept at home. It was true there had been a reduction, but not a very willing one; it was a reduction effected because men could not be obtained. Recruiting fell off, and a reduction was reluctantly made because the Government recognised that the men could not be obtained. But there had not yet been any reduction formally announced on any well-considered plan. He agreed that his right hon. friend was right in not yet having a scheme. It was one of the advantages of the right hon. Gentleman's position to have no scheme, and he regretted that he had to some extent departed from that position by his declaration. One plan to which he had alluded had had various developments—it had suggested itself to all Army reformers—namely, the plan of getting rid of the old linked-battalion system. The right hon. Gentleman had commented very favourably upon the old-fashioned linked-battalion system. This was said to be the Cardwell system, but it was not of the essence of the Cardwell system. Mr. Cardwell, on February 16th, 1871, stated that his plan was—

> "To pass as many men through the ranks as can be done having regard to . . . the time required to make a man an efficient soldier . . .. to increase the Militia, and to improve the organisation of the Volunteers; to provide for compulsory service in case of emergency, and to abolish purchase."

Mr. Cardwell carried all those points except compulsory service, for which he introduced a Bill, but subsequently withdrew it. After Mr. Cardwell went his system was gradually filed away until nothing was left. The linked-battalion system was no essential part of the Cardwell scheme. What Mr. Cardwell found was seventy-one battalions at home—exactly the same number as we had here now, though we had more abroad. But the seventy-one battalions in 1872 were wanted for home defence, because that was before the adoption of the blue-water view. Now that that view had been adopted, was no reduction to be made in these battalions? As to the terms of service, the Secretary of State for War seemed to think that nine years was a short-service system. The right hon. Gentleman said—

> "We have a short-service system here now, and I am thankful for it."

Mr. Cardwell would not have called nine years a short-service system. His short-service system was three years for this country, with an extension to six years when the regiments had to go to India. A nine years system was a long-service system. Mr. Cardwell instituted in 1870 a short-service system of three years and six years, and in 1871 he proposed to go further and to extend the short-service principle in order further to increase the Army Reserve. After he died the whole system was reversed. He desired largely to increase the Reserve, and thanks to that alteration in the Service they would have next year a large Army Reserve of 122,000 men. After Lord Cardwell had gone they had Lord Airey's Committee, which reported that it had taken a great deal of evidence on the system of short service and linked battalions, and that the evidence was against the system. A result of the inquiry was that in 1881 the seven years service was adopted, the men to be kept eight years if the seven years expired as usual when they were in India; and a quarter of the men were to be allowed to extend their service for pension. That was entirely against Lord Cardwell's views, and the result had been that for the last few years we had had a long-service instead of a short-service system. They had also in linked battalions the most costly system that could be applied for foreign drafts, and one which was a perfect millstone round our necks when striving to effect economy. The Government would not be able to make large economies in the Army unless they went straight to this point. Linked battalions and nine years service were adopted in the name of India. A nine years service system was too long if a man did not intend to make a trade of the Army. The present system was a monstrous one to keep up, and if hon. Members looked into it they would not support it for a moment. The right hon. Gentleman had supported it as being for the sake of India, but India had been consistently opposed to it. The evidence given on behalf of the Indian Government before the Royal Commission on Indian expenditure pointed out that eight years was two long for a man who proposed to return to civil life; and they expressed the view that the system suited neither the people of India nor us at home. The right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State had told the House that "the impatient man in the street" asked, Why not reduce the home battalions? and he had given as the answer that in military eyes that would be insanity. He could only say that he was sorry the right hon. Gentleman had military advisers who took that view. Then the right hon. Gentleman passed on to deal with India, and said—

> "The battalions at home are training schools for the Indian battalions, and you cannot abolish a battalion at home without practically abolishing a battalion abroad. . . . It is impossible to cut off battalions at home without ruining battalions abroad. . . . The linking system is thus essential."

That was not and never had been the view of the Government of India. They had always maintained that the establishment of their own system would be cheaper and more effective. India very largely paid the cost of this system; this country only pretended to pay the cost of it. India was now saddled with a burden of £21,000,000 a year, or an increase of £4,000,000 over seven years ago. In the words of the Royal Commission on Indian Expenditure—

> "It is the opinion of the Government of India that the system imposes a heavy charge on Indian revenues without corresponding advantage."

That was a pretty strong opinion. The Esher Committee did not think the question arguable. In their Report, part 2, they stated—

> "We assume that the double-battalion system, as part of the organisation of the Infantry will be abolished as regards the training and supply of drafts for service abroad."

The Committee assumed this would be done without argument, and they went on to discuss future schemes. He could not imagine why his right hon. friend should have gone out of his way to preclude the overwhelmingly strong opinion of the Government of India and of the Esher Committee. In *The Times* last Monday there was an article by the military correspondent, previously the military correspondent of the *Westminster Gazette*, who knew the opinions of the young scientific soldiers, showing that there were only two ways of reducing cost. One was that of the Secretary of State, by diminishing strength in India, South Africa, and the Mediterranean, and the other that recommended by the mover of the Amendment. On the second point the writer said—

> "The linked system is only a fetish . . . There is no sanction, either in theory or in practice, for the linking system in any modern or scientific organisation. It is also more expensive."

As to the question of reduction, one of his hon. friends had suggested that we might leave Malta. Strategic reasons might be given for that course, but the discussion of that question would be out of order. He did not, however, think it was a practical suggestion of reduction. He did not think we were likely to be able to leave Malta. Of course the War Office would get some battalions from South Africa, but they were not likely, in the present state of things, to get a very large number of men from South Africa very soon. He hoped they would, but he did not think it was certain that they would be able to make a very large permanent reduction there. He said "permanent" because there was the risk that they might withdraw a large proportion of the garrison, and then advice might be given as to supposed risks and they might be sent back, which would spoil all the system. India was the only other place, but looking to the unanimity with which the Government of India had expressed their views, he doubted whether any Government, however strong, would be able largely to reduce the number of battalions serving in India. No doubt as matters stood in India they might be able to make a large temporary reduction in the Indian garrison, but how long would it be before they would have to send them back again? He doubted whether, after a great struggle with the Indian Government, they would be able to effect a large permanent reduction of the white garrison in India. If that reduction could not be effected, could they not reduce the number of regular battalions kept in this country in time of peace? That was the issue they raised. Of course every change in system involved a most frightful waste. At the present time the Government of India was buying land and building barracks in new stations under Lord Kitchener's scheme. Then in South Africa millions had been spent on permanent hutting for the accommodation of the large number of troops there. He confessed that he thought the one great source of economy to which they could look was the abandonment of this fetish of the linked battalion system, and the getting rid of a large proportion, or the whole, of the infantry battalions maintained in this country during peace, because the Militia undoubtedly could be made a home service Army on a system that might in time of war replace these regular battalions. He thought that might be done, but if they were not prepared at present to contemplate such a revolutionary scheme then they could fall back upon one of those depôt schemes. Those who advised his right hon. friend were not thinking quite so clearly as he would like them to. They certainly had not thought out this view of economy, and in the Memorandum which the right hon. Gentleman had laid in support of these Estimates he found statements difficult to justify, which bore upon the whole of this question of the future defence of the Empire and the condition of things at home. There were many who cheered the other day some views expressed as to the blue-water view and the possibilities of invasion. There was a statement in the Memorandum as to the handing over of mine-fields from the Army to the Navy. His right hon. friend had a reduction of 1,300 men of the garrison artillery, and 550 officers and men of the Royal Engineers by "transfer of submarine defences to naval control." It was a most astounding fact, showing how much money had been wasted upon this question from time to time, that they had been increasing garrison artillery since the adoption of the blue-water view. It was not a general declaration that had been made against the defences of certain places, and it undoubtedly affected the whole question of the organisation of Volunteers and of the forces that might be maintained at home. When Members were asked to clear their mind upon these questions let them take particular instances. He would give the Secretary of State for War an instance in his own neighbourhood, more or less his own constituency. The Forth Bridge had been newly defended with great gun batteries, as well as with batteries of quick-firing guns upon the island—big guns which, if fired, would reach the Secretary for War's constituency at Haddington or North Berwick. The mine-fields which were supposed to be an essential portion of that defence, had been taken up, and according to the Memorandum had been replaced by other means of defence. Anyone going over the bridge could see what had been done and it would be found that the Naval defence which was to replace the Military defence did not exist, although it was a place where a raid was undoubtedly possible. There were, of course, places like the cruiser stations at Scilly and Berehaven which would have to be defended by some means or other. He doubted very much whether those defences had been thought out and now that the task had been thrown entirely upon the Army ashore, he trusted that the matter would have the anxious consideration of his right hon. friend. It was a problem which must be combined with that of the Militia and the Volunteers, which forces would have to be worked very closely with the Army in connection with these defences. Take the defence of the Islands of Scilly; the electric light installation was worked by Volunteers from Cornwall, in time of peace, as if a time of war prevailed. They worked with the Royal Engineers as colleagues, and that system had received a blow. They had now an opportunity of thinking out all these arrangements in connection one with another. When his right hon. friend frankly declared that he had no plan to recommend, he thought that he ought not to have committed himself to the apparent retention of so large a regular force at home in time of peace, by his language with regard to the linked battalion system. The right hon. Gentleman's Militia scheme had his entire sympathy, so far as he could gather its purport from purposely vague words. He gathered that it was a scheme which was inconsistent with the linked battalion system and if the right hon. Gentleman developed that system, it would make the Militia virtually a regular force at home, because the right hon. Gentleman said he should treat the Militia as being akin to the Regulars. He thought the right hon. Gentleman used the words in such a way as to suggest that the Militia might be substituted for the Regulars. As to the Volunteers, it appeared that they were delivered into the hands of the Secretary of State because they had no representative on the Army Council by which the right hon. Gentleman was advised, and they had not in the past been in close sympathy with the leading members of that Council. He should like to ask the right hon. Gentleman what he meant by asking why it was necessary to go even as far as we had with our Volunteers. The right hon. Gentleman seemed too much inclined to fasten upon rifle clubs, and to speak of the little money which was necessary for the Volunteers. All his remarks were excellent in regard to the Militia, but there was a little too much depreciation of the Volunteers, and although he (Sir Charles Dilke) had always been considered a strong supporter of the "blue water" view, yet he had always believed in accepting from the Volunteers all the services we could get from them, as he believed they would give us that enormous potential supply of men in the event of war to which his right hon. friend made allusion in the noble concluding words of the democratic portion of his speech. He seconded the Motion of his hon. and gallant friend because he believed now, as he had believed for years past, that it was impossible to make a reduction upon expenditure except upon this one Vote.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a number of Land Forces, not exceeding 194,100, all ranks, be maintained for the said service."—(*Major Seely.*)

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR (City of London): I intervene in this debate largely because I have been profoundly interested and, indeed, deeply concerned with the discussion of some of the greater problems of Imperial defence. I do not propose to touch upon those matters of relative detail on which the right hon. Gentleman always speaks with such great knowledge. It would, perhaps, be desirable that I should say something on an Amendment which has for its object the reduction of the number of men and the consequent cost of the Army, quite irrespective, so far as I can gather from the speech of the mover of the Amendment, of the necessity for which that Army exists. I was very much struck, and rather painfully struck, by the view which both the mover and seconder took of the attitude of the country towards military expenditure. They both agreed that, if there was to be a reduction in our general national expenditure, it could only be in the expenditure on the Army. We are all aware that a great many speeches have been made about extravagant and reckless expenditure; but the mover and seconder were both agreed in this, that when you had brought the thing down to a point, there was no hope of making reductions in any department of our public expenditure except the Army. They both stated with unmistakable emphasis that the idea of your Civil Service expenditure's being reduced under this Government or, perhaps, under any Government, and the idea of your Naval expenditure's being reduced, were ideas that had to be abandoned, and if, therefore, reduction had to take place it must take place in the Army. They further admitted, what I think hon. Gentlemen opposite would do well to bear in mind, that the cost of our Army is not due to what is properly called waste at all.

*Sir C. DILKE remarked that what he said was that the constant change of system had had a great deal to do with the matter.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: Both the mover and seconder admitted that the cost of the Army depended on the number of men in the Army, and that if you were to reduce the cost of the Army you could do it only by reducing the number of men in the Army. The inevitable inference is that the enormous cost of our Army now—and nobody questions the magnitude of that cost—is not due to wasteful administration. It is due, if to any blameworthy cause at all, to the fact that the recent Government over-estimated the necessity for a large Army, and that the Imperial needs of the country do not require us to spend so much money or to have so large a force. It is a great thing to have those admissions made, because it concentrates discussion. You no longer have those vague charges of reckless and wasteful administration. I do not think those charges have any foundation. I do not deny, of course, that the scrutiny of the right hon. Gentleman opposite may be able to find in future some means of reduction here and there. But now, when we are discussing national expenditure in its larger aspects, let us admit that, if you choose to keep up an Army of this size, you cannot expect a great reduction in your Army estimates. The mover of the Amendment said that in the past the anxious and natural desire of successive Chancellors of the Exchequer and successive Governments to keep down the Army Estimates had in many cases spoiled the ship for want of a ha'porth of tar. In other words, if any charge could be made against those Governments, it was a charge of niggardliness in dealing with the various parts of the service and not of excessive expenditure in supporting them.

MAJOR SEELY said there was waste as well—waste caused by changes of policy and in other ways—though he had not dwelt on that part of the subject.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: If the hon. Gentleman means there have been changes of policy as regards, for example, fortifications and matters of that kind, and that that has produced an expenditure of public money for which no return has been received, I agree with him. But the idea that this Administration or any administration can avoid that kind of waste is really an illusion, because that kind of waste is due to a progress and change of ideas. Just as a great business firm finds it necessary to scrap its old machinery when new ideas make themselves felt and new machinery is required, so it will be found that, as military science changes and develops with the inevitable progress of time, some expenditure which was thought necessary will prove to have been wasteful, and some fortifications, once thought absolutely needful for the defence of our coasts, will be abandoned for better means of defence. You cannot blame any Government for that, or any body of military opinion. Military men are not greater geniuses than other men. You cannot expect Governments to be more farsighted in their views of what is going to happen than the majority of their fellow citizens. I want to keep, if I can, to this rather narrow but all important question of the number of the troops we require and the cost they involve. Therefore, we may take it for granted that those who come to this House and say that economy in the national expenditure is necessary mean, in the first place, that that economy must be economy in the Army Estimates, and not either in the Navy Estimates or in the Civil Service Estimates, and, secondly, that economy in the Army Estimates must, broadly speaking, take the shape of a great diminution in the number of men we pay and provide for. If that is granted, I confess I listened with some regret to the view of the mover and seconder of this Amendment, who seemed to think that the country is incapable of appreciating the arguments one way or the other for keeping up the Army, and that a justly indignant nation would rush at the Estimates pell-mell, would tear out at random some half-dozen sheets, and would not ask whether this or that is required, but would say, "We do not mean to pay for that, and there is an end of it." I do not believe that the people of this country are so unpatriotic as the mover and seconder of the Amendment would make out. I believe that while they are, of course, anxious that military expenditure should be diminished—and everybody must admit that that enormous burden should be lightened if it is possible—they are perfectly prepared to consider in a reasonable spirit the actual necessities of the Empire and to meet the necessary expenditure of the country. Therefore I put aside all this idea that economy must take place simply because the country desires economy, without considering whether economy carries with it dangers which the country would pay anything to avoid. What we have got to consider in a reasonable spirit is what the necessities of the country really are with regard to the number of men. I am not going to join in any discussion as regards Mr. Cardwell's intention or Mr. Cardwell's schemes. I am not going into the history presented to us by the right hon. Gentleman opposite, or into any of the details to which he has referred. I will take only the very broadest view of our military position, and perhaps I may do so with the less diffidence because it so happens that, as I believe, I was the first responsible Minister of any Government, who, after discussion in the Defence Committee, ventured to lay down in public the proposition that the real and great necessity for which we keep an army was India. There are other very important purposes, but the dominant purpose of the British Army is, not home defence, but Indian defence. And why ? Because in India, and in India alone, we have a great dependency with a land frontier. It is, of course, a commonplace of discussion ; but it is a commonplace that is sometimes forgotten, and it was forgotten for the moment by so great an authority as the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Forest of Dean. He said, "I accept to the full the blue-water school. I am an absolute adherent of that school." Therefore he seemed to infer that we did not require a great army for oversea purposes.

*Sir CHARLES DILKE : Oh, no. I said nothing at all about the oversea army. I estimated a very large reserve. I mentioned 122,000 men next year, and I mentioned the necessity of having cadres to put them into.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR : Very well. But if India is, as I firmly believe it is, the dominant factor, though, of course, not the sole factor, which ought to determine the burden of military expenditur in this country, I should like to know whether this House is going to decide seriously that there ought to be a diminution in our forces until they have a clear view before them of what a great war in defence of India may mean. Of course I may be told, I am not sure that a phrase in the admirable speech of the Secretary for War did not imply it, that we may ignore the Indian difficulty because the great Power with whom alone we might imagine ourselves at war in connection with India is at this moment involved in great domestic difficulties, and certainly does not desire to quarrel with us on any subject, least of all on the subject of the Indian frontier. Of course that is so. Happy relations exist now between us and Russia, and we may hope that all the reforms in that great country will tend to strengthen the bonds of amity between us, and to diminish the power of any school, if such a school there be, which looks forward to an attack on India as a thing to be indulged for the gain it may directly bring, or as a threat to be held over us in our diplomatic relations with other countries. We may hope that the progress of social changes in Russia will diminish that school, if it exists, and we may look forward, with sanguine hope, not only to peace, but to a good understanding on a most solid basis of peace on this subject. But that is not quite enough. Germany and Russia are most friendly to each other, but has the German headquarters staff not to consider the possibility of trouble arising between Germany and Russia ? Is not the same thing true of every country in Europe which has a military neighbour ? Of course it must be true, so long as the European world is constituted on its present lines. So long as any country has a vast potential army, so long every other country must see that its defences can be brought up to a level which will meet any possible emergency, and that without any derogation from the genuine feeling of amity which may bind them close to their neighbours. Therefore we must discuss this, not from the point of view of our present happy relations with Russia, nor even with a view to the increased friendship which I hope will grow up. We must consider this as a military problem between two countries whose territories lie in close proximity, and who have to prepare against any unforeseen emergency which may disturb the present friendly relations between them. That is the question ; and if the House accepts that line of reasoning, it must be plain that what we have to consider in discussing the Army Estimates is, in the first place, what striking force you require for an immediate emergency, what force you require to send out to India the moment difficulties occur, and, thirdly, by what means you are going to expand your Army so as to meet the necessities of a prolonged war should a prolonged war occur. I certainly do not lay down in this House the idea that we cannot diminish the number of our regular troops at home.

I am not going to make myself responsible for any such policy. But I say that any reduction of our troops, whether at home or elsewhere, must be part of a general scheme which secures us an expansible Army, a power of increasing our effective fighting force to a far larger extent than the regular troops which we are asked to vote to-day, and which would enable us to face with equanimity the prospect of not merely a year's war, but of a war which might be extended for a much longer period. Now, how are you going to do that? That is the real question of national defence; and what solution can we find for it? I think myself that the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State was very well advised in his opening speech in not committing himself to anything. I think he is well advised to revolve in his mind all the suggestions that may be made. I think, however, that certain propositions may be laid down, irrespective of any particular plan, which will hold good. The problem is how can you expand your Army so that it will be able to meet European troops in the field when that is required. In case of a war in defence of the North-West Frontier of India, I do not believe any greatly larger force than that which we actually have would be required for, say, a year—at any rate, for a considerable period; but I think such a war may require all we now have, or, at all events, a very large fraction of what we now have. But in the meanwhile do you think that in those months of resting which the very peculiar strategic position of India gives you, you have the machinery now for creating that larger Army which would certainly be required if hostilities were to go on, as in the great wars of the 18th century, far beyond the limits of one, two, or even three years? There are certain things which you can create, relatively speaking, rapidly, but there are other things which you cannot; and it is in the difference of those two things that the whole argument turns. I believe that in a year you can turn a half-drilled soldier into a well-drilled soldier. I do not doubt it. I have always looked with sympathy upon those schemes which would enable us to familiarise the youth of this country with the use of the rifle. That is one of the things which every soldier has to learn. It is a thing which can be easily taught to the youth of the country, it does not require elaborate drill, and it gives an amount of knowledge which may really be of use to the possessor to enable him to take part in the defence of the country. But rifle clubs by themselves are no use. Even Volunteers as Volunteers are no use on the North-Western Frontier of India. They are only of use if the knowledge is turned to account in a different capacity. You therefore require, as I think, as raw material for the Army which you have to improvise in the first year of the war, a certain number of Volunteers. You may have, if we succeed in developing any system at all on the lines which Lord Roberts has suggested, a large body of persons qualified without much greater training to be fairly efficient shots. I believe if you have that material, so far as the soldiers are concerned, you might have all you wanted; but you cannot improvise officers, artillery, artillerymen and staff. Therefore, if you are really to have an expansible Army, and it is only by having it you can have the smallest hope of safely reducing a single man—if now you are to have an expansible Army you must remember that it carries with it the obligation to provide and train in time of peace, officers, artillerymen, the requisite field staff and the skilled gunner who cannot be turned out with the best will in the world all at once merely because a great national necessity comes upon you suddenly. And what I would earnestly press upon Gentlemen like the mover and seconder of this reduction and upon the whole House and the country at large, is this—by all means, if you will, and with the additional light which the investigations of the Defence Committee will throw on the number of men required for Indian defence, a matter of investigation not completed when I ceased to be a member of that Committee—let the country remember that when they have thought out what the number of men is and the different periods corresponding to your length of hypothetical wars they might possibly find it in their power to make some reduction in the Regular troops; I do not say of 10,000 men referred to by the hon. Member. But do not let them commit themselves to the precise number until they see the whole plan before them. Do not let them commit themselves to a reduction in the machine which is undoubtedly efficient until they see, at least in outline and in something like working order, that supplementary organisation which is most difficult to create. I do not blame the Secretary of State for War for not having it at his fingers' end, and I shall not blame him if he cannot produce it next year, or even the year after. It is a great problem; but it is one which should be settled before any reduction in the existing force is made. I know the right hon. Gentleman opposite finds himself in the position which every one of his predecessors has occupied before him; he is sure to be the target for every kind of criticism by those who, whatever admiration they may have for his ability and administrative capacity, think that they have a better Army scheme than he. After all, there are a dozen Army schemes possible. He can only choose one of them, and the devotees of the other eleven are sure to join hands in denouncing him. Do not let him be discouraged by that unfortunate position. Others have had to endure it before him, and I am sure his philosophy will be equal to any strain of that kind. But I will make an appeal to the House and the country—let them remember that merely to reduce the Regular Army, to make no provision for the skilled element which cannot be improvised, is to spend money which will be of very small value in time of strain and stress. Let them have the Regular Army as small as you think you can safely make it, and in addition let them have all the skilled elements which require long training prepared for such expansion as you think the needs of the Empire may require. If the right hon. Gentleman will only devote his abilities to working out on those broad lines some plan which will meet the case of a great war, I for my part shall not be disposed to criticise him because his plans do not fit in with this or that scheme of this or that Army reformer; I for my part shall be content with any solution of the big problem with which he has to deal. I am sure he understands what the elements of the problem are and I am confident that he will devote himself, not merely with assiduity and impartiality, but with determination to making it a great national success.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. HALDANE, Haddington): No Minister in charge of Estimates has ever had less cause to complain of the way in which his proposals have been received than I have, both last week and to-night. The attitude of Members of this House has been both kindly and sympathetic. I laid down last week what I will repeat, that I think I should be extremely unwise were I to go even a little way in the direction of committing myself to definite plans and schemes until I have had some little time to think and work them out. I agree entirely with what the right hon. Gentleman has said, that these things are very difficult, and things on which you can hardly take too much time, because a mistake—as has been pointed out—brings down an avalanche of expense in its wake, and the result is you find yourself with money thrown away which might have been used, had you had a common policy, for a good purpose. That is why I appeal to my hon. friends on this side to join with me in an endeavour as far as possible, by taking time, to take this whole question out of the rut of Party controversy, to get both sides to think and work together in an endeavour to establish something like continuity of policy, whereby we may avoid those great fluctuations which bring about wastages of public money. Having said that, I do not in the slightest degree complain of the line taken by the mover and seconder of the Motion. I think the right hon. Gentleman opposite a little unduly blamed this Motion. My hon. friend the mover explained that he knew perfectly well that you could not knock off 10,000 men on this year's Estimates at a stroke and so plunge things into confusion. He was pointing to the future; and although that is not in form the custom, what I understand he means is to ask what is my attitude towards the question of reduction of *personnel* in the time that is to come. While I have in view the considerations which were urged by the right hon. Gentleman opposite—and I agree as to the absolute necessity of studying the problem with reference to the needs of the Empire at home and abroad—I own I am profoundly impressed by the danger in which our Army organisation stands because of what the public regard as its extravagance. If there is one thing that was made plain in the course of the recent discussions throughout the country it is the desire on the part of the public that they should be required to spend less upon naval and military organisation. Now that is not a mood which it does to neglect or to treat as a light matter. It is a serious matter, because if you neglect it the trend of opinion against increased cost may some day break out and force you into violent courses. It is because I wish to avoid violent courses that I desire to recognise that feeling, and to meet as far as is in my power the desire of those who ask for an Army upon a less extravagant basis than the present. I am quite aware that this is not a matter about which in principle there is really any controversy. Everybody desires economy in Army administration. Everybody has been working for it for some time past. But I do feel that it is possible that if we look at that organisation a little more closely than has hitherto been done, we may find there are possibilities of economy which have been overlooked. It is quite true that economy depends in large measure upon policy. If you look at home, I have at all events a hope of considerable economies there. If you take broadly the position in this country, what is it? Suppose you mobilise, suppose you put all your reserves into the field, and suppose you take into account your Militia and add these together, you have a force in this country for mobilisation of something like 330,000 men. Whether that is a sufficient fighting force or not is quite another matter with which I will deal later. My point is this. Suppose you take as the standard of your striking force a three Army corps standard, that would mean about 130,000 men. That gives you a surplus of 200,000.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: Is that allowing for the mobilisation of the troops abroad?

MR. HALDANE: Yes; for if you mobilise your forces abroad you do not have to provide drafts. The question I put is this—and I put it in order to show how much necessity there is for the closest consideration of this matter—Is it possible to cut down that surplus of 200,000 men by reorganisation? I am not pledging myself in any way; but I put it to the Committee here as a plan for dealing with the home forces only, quite apart from linked battalions or anything else, whether by reorganisation we could get a force at least as efficient as the force we have at the present time and yet make large reductions. It is because I feel there is a strong desire for economy in the country that I say we must consider reductions of *personnel*, because without such reductions you cannot get economy in Army expenditure. I have, therefore, great sympathy with this Motion; and I propose to devote myself in the next year to the closest scrutiny of the question. I do not desire to put forward any scheme or plan, even if I had one. I ask the Committee not to tie my hands. I ask them to leave me free. I ask them not to say, "You must cut down 10,000 men by such a day," because, though I might be able to do that and more, I may find I have not been able to think out the thing by that time. But I give the assurance that I will do my very best to work out the problem of reorganisation in such a way as may lead possibly to such a reduction. Now I come to some general considerations which the Leader of the Opposition put forward. I entirely agree with the right hon. Gentleman that you cannot proceed a single step in this matter unless you attempt something like a scientific determination of what Army—I do not like to use the term "striking force"—of what Army you should make available for attack. It must be realised that in the case of the defence of an Empire like ours defence often means attack. Just as in naval strategy you may have, in order to defend yourself, to seek out your enemy and attack him before he is able to strike at you. Therefore, you want to have your Army on as mobile and efficient a basis as possible. Then the size of the Army has to be determined. But behind that lies the biggest factor of all, and that factor is policy. That is not a thing about which soldiers can calculate. Still, the size of the Army depends on whether your policy is one thing or another. If you are in good relations with a particular nation, if you have reason for thinking that that happy state of things will continue, it is obvious that you may make different dispositions of your forces, and provide for different necessities which you would be unable to do were the situation different. Therefore, it is not absolutely essential in considering what you have to do to provide for every possible contingency, because if you were to attempt to do that you would make yourself bankrupt as a nation, and so stop all chance of social reform. Social reform must be provided for. It makes an urgent call upon us. Accordingly, your policy, be it for the Army or for the Navy, must be a policy of probabilities. Policy must determine your strategy and the provisions you make for your necessities. That is a fact which we have recognised to some extent in the case of the Navy. You must also, of course, consider the situation in India. But there military policy has changed very considerably as changes in general policy have taken place. It is not true to say that the Indian establishment has always been what it is at the present time. The Penjdeh incident created a revolution in the military situation in India. For the last twenty years the situation in India has remained unchanged; but before that time it was entirely different. But I am not laying down any policy in regard to India. I see that the Indian Press, misled by an abbreviated telegraphic report of what I said the other day, took up the notion that I had laid down some policy in regard to India which might or must entail a diminution of the Indian Army. I laid down nothing in regard to India. I merely stated the conditions of the problem that are to be considered. But I say even in regard to India that your plans for the Army must change as policy and the conditions arising out of it change. The same thing is true of South Africa, of Egypt, and of other parts of the Empire. You cannot decide on the size of your Army wholly apart from this important question of policy. Therefore, while I am on the side of the Leader of the Opposition that you must define your striking force and define it scientifically, I must add that the question of policy cannot be absolutely excluded from the consideration of the question of what you are to do. I pass now from these points to the points specifically raised by the mover and seconder of the Amendment. They said things which seemed to indicate that they had a scheme of their own. I may be wrong about that, but it looks like it when anybody talks about diminishing battalions at home and not diminishing battalions abroad. My hon. and gallant friend who moved the Amendment appears to be opposed to diminishing the forces abroad.

MAJOR SEELY: I said you probably would not be able to do so, while you could diminish the forces at home.

MR. HALDANE: That is a matter upon which I can say that I have not a closed mind. But I cannot but be influenced by the very considerable preponderance of military opinion on the subject. After all, men like Sir Evelyn Wood and Lord Roberts cannot be disregarded. It was only this week that I had an opportunity of talking on the subject with Lord Roberts, and he authorised me to say that in his opinion the depot is not to be compared with the battalion in the matter of producing or training troops for service abroad. The right hon. Gentleman opposite, the late Secretary for War, is of a different opinion. My right hon. friend the Member for the Forest of Dean agrees with the right hon. Gentleman. My hon. and gallant friend who moved the Motion will not commit himself on the subject. I do not want to commit myself in the matter. But I do say that I am rendered nervous about these plans for reducing battalions at home without reducing battalions abroad when I find that military expert opinion is against the proposal that depot training might take the place of battalion training. The Cardwell scheme seems to me to have been much misunderstood. What Mr. Cardwell wanted to do was to give battalion training to the troops that were to go abroad. His plan really was to have two battalions in each regiment, one of which should remain at home and be a training school for the men who came from the depot where they were collected, and having gone through two years of training were to proceed to the battalion abroad, joining it as trained soldiers and undergoing a still further process of seasoning. There was another purpose that Mr. Cardwell had in view. That was by means of a short service with the colours to get reserves, which filled up, on mobilisation, the battalions at home.

and made a second battalion liable for service abroad. Then in time of war, under his scheme, you might improvise provisional battalions for service abroad and may even use the Militia battalions for the purpose. But that is a subject upon which I do not desire to dogmatise. I should like to be given time for its consideration. But be that as it may, you have two great schools of thought on the subject. One holds that battalion training is the only good training for foreign service. The other holds that depot training is sufficient. I am not pledged to anything. I but state the difficulties that crowd upon me when considering the subject. But there is one thing which must weigh with me, and that is that India will not take our drafts until the men reach the age of twenty. That is founded on a great deal of good sense, and on medical and military expert reasons. On the other hand, you cannot train the men for two years in the depot. It is only in the battalion that you can train them. For the short training in the depot you must have recruits of nineteen. But you cannot get recruits at that age. You can neither take recruits as young as boys are on leaving school nor get them as old as nineteen, when they are learning a trade, and perhaps married. Then, again, if I were to listen to the blandishments of the depot advocates and give up lightly the notion of linked battalions, what sort of depots should we require? I think the right hon. Gentleman himself was of opinion that you could only give depot training in large depots, such as the Marines have at Walmer. But these large depots would cost a good deal of money; a couple of millions would not be a large sum to spend on the provision of these large depots—I doubt whether you could do it for less—and these are not the days when a War Minister has a couple of millions to spend lightly. I am very indisposed to embark on a new scheme which would entail such an expenditure, which if the plan did not turn out well would be wasted. Therefore I do not look with favour on the proposition that I should begin my reductions of battalions at home without having first considered the question whether I could also reduce battalions abroad. The right hon. Gentleman, I think, alluded to the Cardwell scheme as having broken down because the number of battalions abroad is eighty-six and the number at home is seventy-one. But it has not broken down; it is only in form that that discrepancy exists. It is true there are only seventy-one battalions at home and eighty-five abroad; but in the case of fourteen of the battalions serving abroad seven are in India and South Africa, and seven more are on what is called short tour—that is to say, in the Mediterranean, at Malta, Gibraltar, or some place close at hand where the drafts go out, and whence they feed the battalions in foreign places with which they are linked. Therefore the seven battalions on short tour are treated as battalions at home. What is the objection to that?

*SIR CHARLES DILKE: In the case of Malta there is sickness.

MR. HALDANE: That may be a reason for bringing down the size of the garrison at Malta; but the point remains that these seven battalions on short tour near at hand are feeding battalions just as much under present conditions as they would have been in the days of Mr. Cardwell. It is enough for me to say that there is a large field for consideration and inquiry in these matters. I do not desire to approach it with my hands tied, and, therefore, I deprecate the notion of anybody's moving a reduction of 10,000 either for this or for next year. I may be able to do as well or better, but what I do promise the Committee is that I will do my best. I spoke of continuity, and I feel that in embarking upon this matter I am really carrying out, so far as reductions are concerned, the policy which was inaugurated by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Croydon. I think he recognised as much as I do that there is a great surplus in the British Army at the present time. In 1896-97 there were some 50,000 fewer men under this Vote A than there are at the present day, and what has really caused the excess is the dimensions to which our Army was swollen by the war and the difficulty of getting those dimensions down quickly. So that you have a very large margin left of increase over what you had before the war. The Committee will notice from my statement that I have reduced the number of men this year by 5,300 already. I was able to do that by some changes that I made myself, and I inherited some reductions—the bulk of them, and I think they were very wise ones—from the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Croydon. He reduced the troops in the West Indies very substantially, he reduced the troops in Bermuda, Malta, and Gibraltar, and, by virtue of the arrangement made in regard to Halifax, in Canada. There is, too, a reduction in South Africa, which, I think, is partly his and partly mine, and there are some miscellaneous reductions. The result is that since August 1st last we have, I think, in continuity of policy made a reduction of 5,300. I do not say that we can assume with any certainly that that reduction will be kept up, but I do say it shows that the pressure which the war produced, the swelling of the garrisons which took place, is beginning to go down, and it ought not to be difficult to get something very substantial off the large increase of 50,000 which has taken place since the period of the war. The main point we have to consider is: What is the best way to approach this problem? I venture respectfully to suggest that the best and most rapid course is to take time over it. Do not let us alarm the public outside by sensational promises of reduction. After all, if public opinion is against you, you get a tremendous swing round very quickly. It is only three or four years, since sitting on the benches on the opposite side of the House, one wondered whether the balance between the Opposition and the then Government would ever be altered or redressed. I always felt that one did not know how quickly the change would come. Now the wonder is all the other way. But that period may not last; and if the public were to lose confidence in our Army and foreign policy there might be a swing round just as violent as there was on that occasion, with the result that right hon. Gentlemen opposite, even though they acepted our principles, which I believe would remain theirs, would be driven by the force of public opinion hastily to get up the strength of the Army. It is just to avoid that change, and to get a settled policy which should be the policy of the two Parties, that one is anxious to avoid making sensational undertakings and promises that might embarrass one if at some particular time one could not bring off the figure which had been promised. Therefore, while my whole sympathy is with the spirit in which my hon. and gallant friend moved his Motion, I do not wish to commit myself to it, by a reduction of battalions at home, or any particular kind or way. I wish to have my hands free to work out the matter in a spirit of which I trust I have given an earnest to the Committee. I think I have covered most of the points put to me. One or two questions were addressed to me by my right hon. friend the Member for the Forest of Dean. He spoke of the Volunteers, and it seemed to have struck him that in what I said I was rather depreciating the utility of the Volunteer force. Such was not my intention. What I pointed out was this—and it had a close bearing on the remarks of the Leader of the Opposition—that in this country we are in a peculiar position. On the Continent the word "mobilize" flashes across the wires, and the troops may be in contact with the enemy in ten days; the result is that it is absolutely necessary that their reserve, the men whom they are to bring up, should be men in such a high state of efficiency that they can be immediately available. But, as I pointed out last week, we from our island position, and so long as we keep up our naval strength, are more happily situated; we shall always have an interval in which to pull ourselves together. We have got our Regular troops available for the first attack, and there is time, such as no other nation has, in which to bring up the strength of our Army, if only there is power of expansion behind. It is quite true that for fighting across the seas at a distance we require a more mobile and ready Army, though smaller, than any other great Power; that has to be borne in mind. But it is also true that, when we come to expansion behind, we shall have more interval than any other nation in which to prepare ourselves, and to get what exists potentially into actual and fighting shape. In other words, our reserves need not be in the first instance highly trained men.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Not the officers?

MR. HALDANE: I will come to that point. The men's training may be divided into two parts—one which will give what I may call an elementary training; and the other, which may come into operation if you devise means to that end, which will convert men who are partially trained, and whom you ought to have in large numbers, into soldiers fit to be put down against Regulars. It is because of that condition that I think you ought to aim at getting quantity rather than quality in the reservoir from which you are to expand. You will have time in which to turn your quantity into quality. Nobody values more than I the splendid work that has been done in Volunteer organisation; and I hope that work will not diminish but be maintained; but I should like to put alongside with it other and less formal organisations which may fill up your reservoir and make larger the quantity of men whom, if hostilities break out, you may turn into fighting shape to support your Regular Army. The right hon. Gentleman says that that requires officers. It does, and it requires artillery, and, above all, a skeleton organisation. No such organisation can be perfect unless it be thought out on the basis of what use it will be on mobilisation. If a scheme of the kind is possible, and I have thrown it down to be considered and thought out, it becomes peculiarly important when we come to the question of possible expansion. It is clear that it must be worked out on the basis of mobilisation for war and the fighting efficiency of your force when you get it, and on no other basis. It will require that we shall provide some kind of reserve of officers; it will require that we shall make new avenues for the training of our officers, that we shall find some means of keeping a highly skilled class of person who may, perhaps, make the business the second branch of his profession, but taking it seriously, giving a certain time to it, prepare himself to take his part in training his troops when the necessity arises. That will have to be considered, and on a considerable scale, and that is one of the things that goes to the root of your power of expansion in time of war. What is most important is that there should be the skeleton organisation. It seems to me that you can reduce the dimensions of your striking force and Regular Army to their strict scientific proportions if only you have this power of expansion behind. I go back to my old illustration of three Army Corps as a maximum, and, taking that as a maximum, we have a surplus of artillery—which I think is going to play a more important part in the wars of the future—to the extent of thirty-five batteries in excess of that standard. I am not saying that with a view of intimating that it is a thing you should lightly abolish, but I do say that there you have something which comes to be a real factor in your power of expansion. It is not always necessary to keep these up to their full and complete organisation so long as you have the officers and trained men who are requisite, but, at any rate, it gives you a reserve in artillery which you may take into account in making your plans for the future. But into these things I do not desire to enter further than to answer the questions and the criticisms that have been addressed to me. I say again to the Committee that I have the spirit of this Motion thoroughly at heart, that I accept the feeling that there is a general desire that we should reach a state of things in which the figures of the Army and Navy should not be of those formidable dimensions that they are at the present time. I am grateful to my hon. and gallant friend for telling me that he does not really mean to strike 10,000 men off the Army in the present year, or even, under all circumstances, I should take it, next year. [Cries of "Yes."] Possibly more, possibly less, according to the necessity. My hon. and gallant friend, I am sure, does not wish to tie my hands beforehand, under all conceivable circumstances, when I tell him I am putting all the strength I can, and that the Army Council with me are devoting their whole energies into working these things out on a basis which will secure what he desires. We recognise that the Army is in danger of unpopularity if we cannot get these Estimates within a reasonable compass; and if I am not pledging myself to any particular thing it is not because I am not as zealous as my hon. and gallant friend, but because I feel that any pledge must involve tying myself in advance to some scheme, to some plan which I have not yet thought out, and which it may be desirable to give in some different form from that which was contemplated at starting. Subject to that, I have no quarrel with my hon. and gallant friend for raising this question and discussing it in the friendly spirit and with the kindly temper that he has done on this occasion.

LORD WILLOUGHBY DE ERESBY (Lincolnshire, Horncastle) said there were certain matters in connection with the speech made by the Secretary for War with which he, for one, was somewhat disappointed. They had heard a great deal both in and out of Parliament about the great extravagance in public funds, and that large sums of money had been wasted by the War Office. They had now a complete change of Government and a complete change of Party, and he had fully expected, perhaps in the innocence of his heart, that when they had a Government pledged to economy and efficiency, and one which the Prime Minister said was a Government of retrenchment, they would, at all events, have had a certain amount of reduction in the Army Estimates. He remembered that in the last Parliament there were a large number of Members who were always stating that the money spent upon the Army had been most extravagantly spent, and that there was a large waste, and so he fully expected that the Secretary for War would have been able to find even in a few short months where all this waste was occurring, and that he would have been able to make a very considerable reduction in the expenditure. Unfortunately for the taxpayers, it had been found that there was not this wasteful extravagance which some people had imagined. He should not be doing justice or credit to the right hon. Gentleman who so ably filled the office of Minister for War if he did not say that he had been unable to find any such wasteful extravagance, for he believed that if it had existed he would have been able to place his finger upon the spot. He had put down a Motion for reduction mainly to obtain some further explanation from the Minister for War upon the subject of the linked battalions. Year after year he had come to this House and listened to the explanations which War Ministers on both sides had given for continuing the linked battalion system, and he was as convinced as ever that the system was wrong. It was said that it was absolutely necessary that there should be one battalion at home for every battalion abroad, but they had discovered that this was not the case. There were battalions abroad which were called home battalions, and the whole system broke down in practice. The reason given by the Prime Minister last year or the year before for maintaining this number of battalions was that they required this number of men as a skeleton to be made up by the Reserves, and that the number at home was sufficient to bring up the strength of the striking force to three Army corps. The chief reason urged for the necessity of three Army corps was the defence of the North West frontier of India. The hon. Member for Cardiff, in a speech last session, was particularly severe on the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Croydon, and he should like to hear the hon. Member's opinions of the state of affairs at the present time. The hon. Member then took the view that the three Army corps at home were not necessary to send to India, and he quoted the opinions of officers on this very subject. For the sake of argument he (the speaker) would admit that these three Army corps were required for the defence of the North West frontier of India, but the Secretary of State for War had stated that in his opinion Army expenditure must to a great extent depend upon policy. Was there now the same fear of invasion of the North West frontier as there was two years ago? He did not believe anyone either inside or outside of this House who had studied the question would say that the North West frontier was in the same danger of attack as it was two years ago. He most respectfully urged the abandonment of the idea that this linked battalion system should remain as a skeleton by which they were to send three Army corps abroad, because he thought the expenditure upon it was excessive. He did not for one moment admit the principle that they must have one battalion at home and one abroad, for that scheme had broken down, and the Secretary of State for War appeared to think that if they did away with the linked battalion system, they must go in for depôts for training the men. Surely there was another way out of the difficulty. Would it not be possible to have regiments consisting of two battalions instead of three battalions, and then two of those battalions could serve abroad and one at home. He thought this appeared to be a particularly good time for bringing about such a change. He was in no way hostile to the enlistment for nine years with the colours and three with the Reserves which was now in force, but nevertheless he thought it was an opportune moment for the Secretary of State for War to consider whether or not the change he had suggested was a good one. If they enlisted men for nine years with the colours and three with the Reserves they would require fewer drafts for abroad, and they would not require changing quite so frequently. Therefore he hoped they would be able to reduce the number of battalions at home. The Secretary of State for War had stated that he had already considered this question, and that he had an open mind. Under those circumstances he did not wish to press the matter any further. There was, however, another point which he thought was a great argument in favour of the reduction of the number of battalions at home. There were certain people who held strongly that those battalions would be absolutely useless unless they had long experience of military discipline. They must accept the circumstances as they were, and they must recognise that the people of this country would not go on spending so much money on the Army. The Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies a few years ago stated that he was going to raise the flag of economy, and he trusted that he would now use his efforts with the Government in that direction. It was absolutely imperative that the country should spend less money upon the Army, and they could only achieve economy by reducing the number of Regular battalions at home. If this large body of troops was to be of any use, there would have to be with the men a large supply of highly skilled officers and sergeants. He had faith enough in his own countrymen to believe that if this country happened to be in a tight place, and had to make another great effort, there would be hundreds of thousands of men who would say, "Put a rifle in our hands, and teach us how to use it." It was no use doing this if there was nobody to teach them how to use the rifles. They knew what happened in the case of the South African War. When this country got into difficulties, so far from the Auxiliaries having extra trained men, they found that every officer, sergeant, and non-commissioned officer in the Auxiliary Forces was taken away to fill up the ranks of the commissioned and non-commissioned officers. He was himself for six weeks in a Yeomanry brigade in South Africa, which must have cost the country a considerable amount of money, and he had no hesitation in saying that they might just as well have stayed at home, and the money spent upon them was simply thrown down the gutter, because there was not an officer properly qualified to teach them anything. If they wished that there should be behind the Regular Army a strong body to support them, they must make up their minds to spend more money on retaining specially good officers, whom, in the day of trial, they would be able to draft among these Auxiliary Forces, so that, in the course of a few months, they would be able to make them into competent soldiers. He hoped that the right hon. Gentleman would consider this question, and if it was found that the long service system depleted the Reserves, surely it would be possible to adopt a shorter service. He never could see why they should have a hard and fast rule for recruiting. After the speech of the Secretary of State for War, he would not move the reduction of which he had given notice, but would content himself with impressing upon the right hon. Gentleman the importance of having with the Reserves more officers and sergeants in order to help the Auxiliaries.

*LORD DALMENY (Midlothian) said he asked the House to exercise that clemency which it invariably accorded to a Member of Parliament who was making his maiden speech. His object in rising was to say what he could for the very much abused so-called Cardwell system. In his opinion the Cardwell system at the present time was the best that had yet been brought forward, and under that system they got more battalions than under any other. At present there were seventy-one battalions at home and eighty-five abroad. If they adopted the depôt system, which he supposed was the only alternative, the cost would be very little less, and it would also have many disadvantages which the present system had not. In the first place they must have a larger number of men for the depôts, and they must take away at once 27,000 men from the battalions in this country. It was generally agreed that to supply drafts for 80,000 men abroad, 27,000 men would be required in depôts in this country, and that would leave them with 37,500 non-commissioned officers and men. That would mean that there would be forty-four battalions instead of seventy-one in this country. It seemed to him that if they reduced their battalions they would be doing something that it would be very difficult to replace. The Leader of the Opposition had said that there were some things it was impossible to improvise, and one of these was a fighting force with proper cadres in time of war. Each of these battalions, however skeleton they might be, could absorb a great number of recruits and a vast amount of raw material of every kind. It would be agreed that they had not too many cadres during the late South African war, and he thought it would be injudicious to reduce the number they had at the present time. Depôt training was not such good training as battalion training. Depot training was good for teaching drill, but it was generally agreed by experts of all kinds that battalion training was infinitely superior in the way of teaching officers field service. The Cardwell system was also the best for recruiting. The territorial system — small single county areas—was one of the foundations of his plan. He believed that in the last thirty years, and more especially since the end of the South African war, the territorial feeling had been growing every year. Under the depot system, in order to join together a large number of battalions, they had to make the area very much larger. If that was the case he thought recruiting would fall off. Under the depot system they would have, for instance, drafts of men coming directly from the Black Watch to the Gordon Highlanders, with a consequent loss of *esprit de corps*. The territorial feeling of the county was for its own particular regiment, and when they lost that they would find that recruiting would fall off largely. The hon. and gallant Member for the Abercromby Division of Liverpool wanted to reduce the Army by 10,000 men. He did not think the hon. and gallant Member had any particular scheme for the reduction of the Army. He simply wanted 10,000 men done away with. [AN HON. MEMBER: Hear, hear; set to work.] He dared say it was time that they were done away with, but to move a reduction of 10,000 without saying whether they were to be taken from the cavalry, the artillery, or the infantry, was like putting a stick into a very intricate machine when it was working.

MAJOR SEELY: I said the infantry.

LORD DALMENY said he was as much in favour of a reduction of expenditure in the Army as any hon. Gentleman, but if they economised suddenly they would find that it was more expensive in the long run. They must give the Secretary of State for War time to make sure of his new policy. The noble Lord opposite seemed surprised that the right hon. Gentleman was not able to bring forward a policy at once. He did not think there had ever been a Secretary of State for War who had brought forward a policy at once—at all events a successful or economical policy. Army expenditure depended on policy. The best way to economise was by reducing the forces abroad, and that reduction rested not so much with the Secretary of State for War as with the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs and the Secretary of State for the Colonies. If the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs could assure them that there need be no fear of trouble on the north-western frontier of India, then the forces in India might be reduced. If the Secretary of State for the Colonies could assure them in regard to affairs in South Africa, then a reduction in the forces there might also be effected. During the short time he was in the Army he became keenly conscious of the alarm and despondency which each new Secretary of State for War and each new policy created there.

SIR HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central) said he could not discover from the speech of the hon. and gallant Member for the Abercromby Division of Liverpool any ground for the proposal to reduce the Army by 10,000 men except with respect to expense. He did not consider that a good reason for the proposal. He was sorry to hear the right hon. baronet the Member for the Forest of Dean say that the Army must be ruthlessly cut down. If that were done they knew from experience it was the most extravagant policy they could adopt. In a few months a panic mood might set in, and the men would be replaced in the most costly manner possible. The Cardwell system had been much talked of to-day, but no one had suggested to the Secretary of State any practicable scheme which might be put in the place of the double battalion system. He believed the depôt system to be the worst that could possibly exist. It was tried for a long time and found not to answer at all. Under that system the men did not obtain the regimental feeling, the *esprit de corps*, which was so essential in the British Army. Of course, they all desired to reduce the cost of the British Army, but in doing so they must proceed with caution. The British Army was in no sense comparable with that of Germany or any other army, because no other army had such calls upon it throughout the world. A few days ago an admirable speech was made by the Secretary of State for War, but they could see the alarm in India in consequence of his very moderate and guarded allusion to the reduction of the Indian garrison. It was quite true that the danger which threatened the North-Western frontier for many years had temporarily ceased, but there was no reason to suppose that the recuperative power of the great nation by which it was said to be threatened would not be as great in the future as it had been in the past. In all probability the disturbed condition of the country would not be any guarantee that the aims of ambitious soldiers would not be directed, in the future as in the past, towards the north-western frontier. Therefore any weakening of our forces in India was to be approached with the greatest caution. The Secretary of State for War, it was satisfactory to see, was on the best terms with his Army Council; he had surrounded himself with the ablest officers in the Army, and his private secretary was one of the ablest officers in the service. He desired to thank the Secretary of State for the attitude he had taken up in regard to the Auxiliary Forces. If there was any justification for the reduction of the Army by 10,000 men, or any other number, it would be found in the policy which the right hon. Gentleman foreshadowed as to the Militia and the Volunteers and the other reserve forces. As to the Militia, there was no one who had been connected with that body who did not appreciate the attention which the right hon. Gentleman had given to it. With regard to the Volunteers, they already saw an addition to their numbers, which showed that the policy which had been pursued towards them during the last few months had had a great deal to do with the filling of the vacant places which had been brought about by the policy of the last few years. He wanted the right hon. Gentleman, when once he had decided upon his policy, to give it a fair chance and not to keep on meddling with it and imposing new conditions. It was that course of policy which upset both officers and men, prevented their getting good men into the force, and drove good men out. He understood that the right hon. Gentleman intended to act at once upon the report of the Norfolk Commission and to organise the Volunteers into brigades under commanders, who would not be taken away by the mobilisation of the Regular Army. Had it been decided to take the Metropolitan Volunteers outside that organisation? If so, he entreated the right hon. Gentleman to re-consider his decision and to give the Metropolitan Volunteers, who numbered some 30,000, the same brigade organisation as he proposed to give to the forces in the provinces. If this were not done, the Metropolitan Volunteers would be at a great disadvantage as compared with the rest of the Volunteer forces of the country, and this fact would be a source of dissatisfaction and discontent. He hoped his right hon. friend would also allow the Auxiliary Forces to be represented upon the Army Council and give them every access to himself. Then he felt certain that there would be a considerable ground for reduction of our military expenditure. The cost of the soldier was £81, but that of the Volunteer only £7, and by doing all he could to encourage the cheaper branch of the service the right hon. Gentleman would do a great deal to increase the defensive power of the country and to prepare the country for war.

*SIR J. DICKSON-POYNDER (Wiltshire, Chippenham) said he should like to join with other speakers in offering congratulations to his right hon. friend for his recent statement to the House and the country. In the first place, contrary to the practice of his predecessors, the right hon. Gentleman did not attempt the impossible and try to unfold to the House at a moment's notice a brand new scheme. In the past, ill-thought-out schemes had involved the country in great difficulty and expense. He thought the country and the Army were indebted to the right hon. Gentleman for having decided to think first and then to act. His speeches took the form rather of abstract statements of thought than concrete pronouncements of policy, but he had indicated throughout a determination, when he was in a position to act, to effect economy in Army expenditure. He had already indicated methods by which he could effect that economy. He proposed to get rid of useless forts, depots and stores, with their attendant staffs, which had too long been playing an expensive part in Army organisation. In other ways also the right hon. Gentleman had indicated how he could effect economies which would be useful, but in his (the speaker's) view it was certain that there was only one way in which he could effect a reduction and that was by reducing the men in the Regular Army. He fully sympathised with the Motion for reduction which had been moved, and he sincerely trusted that there would be later on a reduction not only of 10,000 men, but of a considerably larger number. He recognised, however, that, in view of the fact that the Secretary of State had no scheme ready at the present moment, it was quite impossible to expect him to carry out any plan of reform this year, but he hoped that in the course of the next twelve months, with his great powers of administration, and those of his military advisers, he would be able to elaborate such a scheme as would provide for a very substantial reduction. The economy could, however, only be effected ultimately by reducing the men of the Regular Army. We had now something like 135,000 men established in oversea garrisons; 75,000 in India, and the remainder spread throughout the different portions of the Empire. The right hon. Gentleman had indicated that the military establishment in India might possibly in future be reduced, that taking into account recent events which had occurred to our neighbours on the north-west frontier of India it appeared likely that a certain reduction might take place in the British military establishment. This, however, was not so much a question of any neighbouring country, but a question of endangering our own prestige in India. He thought competent judges would tell the right hon. Gentleman that 74,000 or 75,000 men was the irreducible minimum which was necessary to maintain our prestige in India. He did not, therefore, look for reductions in India, but there were other portions of the Empire, such as Malta, where reductions might be effected. This was, however, a matter of Cabinet policy. Another alternative by means of which the Army could be reduced was by reducing the home battalions, but if any reduction was to take place it must mean the abandonment of the Cardwell system of linked battalions which had been the basis of our organisations for twenty-five years. It was not, necessary however, under our present system, when we had all accepted the doctrine of the "Blue-water" school. What was really required for our military defence was, first, a highly trained and efficient striking force of 25,000 men ready to go at a moment's notice to distant parts of the Empire; secondly, a regular stream of drafts to our foreign garrisons; and, thirdly, a great citizen army to meet contingencies at home.

In order to supply our garrisons abroad it was necessary to maintain at home 125 men for every 1,000 men sent out. Estimating our foreign garrisons at 90,000 men, we should require 13,000 men a year for drafts and 3,000 men for their depôt purposes. Taking the home striking force at 24,000 men, and adding 4,000 for depôt purposes, they would arrive at a total of 134,000 men. Our Regular infantry to-day numbered 172,000 men. That was a difference of 38,000 men. He did not suggest that the Regular Army could be reduced by that number, but there were 38,000 men which the right hon. Gentleman could play with when he came to consider his scheme. It had been said by the noble Lord, who made an interesting speech, that the abandonment of the linked battalion system would decrease the efficiency of the Army. In the case of the old depot system of years ago that might be the case, but there was no reason why improvement should not be made in the system, so that it should turn out as efficient troops as the linked battalion system. He was sure the country were determined that Army expenditure should be reduced, and he thought there was no means of reducing expenditure unless they reduced these battalions, abandoned the Cardwell system, and put some other in its place. He hoped next year to see a substantial reduction in the infantry of the line proposed. If the Army was to be maintained on a voluntary basis it must be established on principles in accord with democratic national sentiment. Much had been done in regard to pay, conditions of life in the Army, and forfeits. An even more important consideration was the position of the soldier after his term of service had expired and he left the colours. Our present Army system contributed largely to the ranks of unskilled labourers. Last year there were over 44,000 vagrants relieved by the police in the county of Wiltshire, and of these 5,500 were men who had been in the Army. Those were formidable figures, showing the consequences of the present precarious system, by which men were discharged from the Army to shift for themselves. It was not well that a large proportion of the Reserve should be found in the ranks of vagrancy. There was no reason why soldiers in barracks should not be taught some trade during the long winter months. Such a scheme would require the co-operation of all the industrial departments of the State and of the local authorities. Of all Army reforms there was none more urgent than the making of some arrangements to ensure employment of men who had been in the ranks.

SIR CARNE RASCH (Essex, Chelmsford) said he thought that if the mover and seconder of the Amendment were not satisfied with the statement of the Secretary of State for War they were indeed hard to please. He congratulated the right hon. Gentleman on the speech he made in the City and also on the speech he made in the House the other day. He had seen the rise and fall of many Secretaries of State for War and their maiden speeches were always received with a pæan of applause; but the halo with which they were surrounded soon became somewhat dim. He did not think that that would be the case with the right hon. Gentleman, and he certainly hoped it would not. He was able to agree with nearly all that the right hon. Gentleman said the other night, but, of course, one had certain criticisms to make. With reference to the question of the Militia it was to his mind a patent and recognised fraud, and was in a condition of chaos. It was an establishment of something like 90,000 strong, but he did not believe they could put 40,000 into line. What was the right hon. Gentleman going to do with the Militia? The President of the Local Government Board had stated some time ago that twenty battalions of Militia were going to be called out in the winter to help the unemployed. Was the Militia going to be a sort of sublimated Salvation Army shelter? Whatever the merits of the unemployed might be they were not the class to make the soldiers who would be required to back up the troops on the North-West frontier, or to be used in any big affair we might have at home. With regard to the Regular Army itself the right hon. Gentleman wanted one which was small, more mobile, better equipped, and with absolutely up-to-date material. The right hon. Gentleman said that if he reduced the Regular Army he would encourage the auxiliary forces.

But how was he going to encourage them? By having 1,000,000 or 500,000 untrained men with rifles? Was the real training to be delayed until war was declared? The right hon. Gentleman backed up his arguments by referring to the levies raised on the Loire in 1870 and 1871. He was in France during the war, and happened to know something about that. It was perfectly true that Gambetta stamped his foot and raised these legions on the soil. But what good were they? They were crumpled up by Von der Tann, as were the *francstireurs* by Manteuffel. This example simply proved that soldiers could not be improvised. What caused the internment of the French soliders on the Swiss frontier was that they could not operate owing to the lack of artillery. and also because their ranks were filled by irregular troops. These were the last instances he knew of in European history of pitting untrained irregular forces against regular troops. He really thought that if the right hon. Gentleman carried out any such scheme he would be following the extraordinary advice given by the late Member for the Bodmin Division of Cornwall, who the other day advised an audience whom he was addressing to try the glorious risk of scrapping the Navy and disbanding the Army. It would certainly be a risk, but he for one could not see where the glory came in.

*MAJOR DUNNE (Walsall) said that with regard to the garrisons at Malta and Gilbraltar he would suggest to the Secretary of State for War that possibly he might find an opportunity at those places to effect that reduction which so many on the Ministerial side of the House felt to be necessary in the great Army Estimates. So far as infantry were concerned at Malta and Gibraltar they were absolutely and entirely useless. If Malta or Gibraltar were seriously threatened by a close blockade a large body of useless infantry would be locked up which would seriously hamper their defence. There was a curious fascination in fortified places as refuges for infantry, but military history told them how fatal had been that fascination to commanders who had taken advantage of fortified places. Many military students were convinced that had Bazaine not allowed himself to withdraw into the fortress of Metz after his defeat at St. Privat he would very likely have been able to save the great bulk of his army, instead of having to surrender the total force. He thought the large number of infantry locked up in Malta and Gibraltar was a source of weakness in case of a blockade, and that the defence of those places should be entrusted to the Navy and Garrison Artillery.

*COLONEL SANDYS (Lancashire, Bootle) said that although he had listened to the speeches of many Secretaries of State for War he was never more impressed than by the practical views expressed by the right hon. Gentleman who now held that position. The point which appealed most to him was the one in which he said he had not formulated any hard and fast line with reference to the organisation of the Army; and it was on that account chiefly that he felt that the few remarks he desired to offer might be considered by the right hon. Gentleman before making up his mind on that subject. He was afraid his remarks, however, would not commend themselves to Gentlemen below the gangway on the Ministerial side of the House, because he could not help contrasting the eagerness with which proposals for reduction of the Army were now received by Gentlemen sitting on those Benches with the sort of feeling they exhibited just before the outbreak of the Boer War, when in opposition, and when everyone was eager to vote for more men and supplies for the Army. What occurred at that time would occur again upon a similar occasion; but, although they might be sure of the patriotism of the House of Commons rising to the necessities of the time and that they would vote millions of money and thousands of men, there was one thing they could not vote, and that was time to prepare the men for the work that lay in front of them. It was, therefore, with some dismay that he heard proposals for reducing the Army in India. It was shortly after the reduction of the British Army in India to a total of 35,000 men that the Indian

Mutiny broke out. He considered it would be fatal for the Government to reduce our forces in India at the present time. There were now 78,000 troops for India. He believed that on the authority of Lord Roberts that number of British troops was fixed as the minimum for the safety of the country, and he should be averse from anything which in any way weakened the garrison in India. He thought it within the bounds of possibility that we might be called upon suddenly to increase that force very largely. It had been stated by the right hon. Gentleman on the Front Bench that policy had a great deal to do with the case, and that at the present time we were on very friendly relations with the great Power which threatened our Indian frontier. It should be remembered that, although at the present time it was improbable that we should have any direct menace or any immediate attack from that Power, yet the Russian Foreign Office was not an affair of Party as it was here; for it maintained the continuous policy laid down by the greatest statesman that Russia ever had, Peter the Great, that it was essential to Russia that she should possess India; this was part of his last will, and Russia had worked continuously upon those lines up to the present time, and she was still persistently working in that direction. What was our position in reference to that policy? We had become in India not an insular but a continental Power, and the principles which governed the forces of such a Power governed our forces there. He had heard it stated, and the statement had not been contradicted, that during the whole of the Japanese War the Russians maintained intact a force of 400,000 men between the frontier of India and the head of the Persian Gulf for some possible contingency that might arise; and what could arise there except some complication with England? He believed that the scheme of Russian statesmen was at the right time to advance upon India, in which case their Navy would be upon the flank of our communications by sea. How were we going to get troops to India in case of entanglement with Russia? In these circumstances was it wise to contemplate for one moment any reduction of our forces in India? Would it not be wiser to consider how, in the event of any sudden declaration of war, or in case we become involved with that country, we should be able to largely reinforce our forces in India. That brought him to consider our military position. He did not propose to go into details now, but he thought the Committee ought to take up a much wider field of observation. The organisation of the British Army was what they should look to when they had settled what the military factors were, and then they could see what reduction was possible in each one of them. If they took 78,000 for India as the minimum there could not be any reduction there. We required the garrisons for the Mediterranean and for other places too. We needed also beyond this a striking force which we could send out from this country, and we also required a force for the defence of these islands against a possible attack. So that there were four large bodies of troops which we had to maintain at a certain and a sufficient strength. The point which the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War had to settle was what the strength of these component parts must be, how he could keep them up to that strength in case of war, and how far he could reduce them in time of peace with safety in reference to a time of war. The hon. Baronet the Member for Wiltshire thought the reduction should take place in the home battalions, and he had declared that he belonged to the blue-water school of opinion. But personally he did not agree with the blue-water school and their views. He considered that this country was open to attack, under certain conditions, and the Secretary of State for War should prepare his forces to meet any attack which might come upon us suddenly, with, it might be, small help from the Navy, and which, if it came, would be in the nature of a surprise attack, giving small time for preparation. That was a problem to which the right hon. Gentleman should devote his best attention. How long should we be given to get ready to face an attacking force if the Navy was away on its proper duty? We should have only about four days to be ready to meet a large force of the enemy, and therefore it was necessary that our forces should be in such a state of preparation that they would be ready to meet an attacking force in our own country in four days. That attack could only succeed by a surprise. The idea of the gentlemen of the blue-water school was that because we had a strong Navy we were free of all further responsibility for the defence of these islands. Was the efficiency of the Navy to be decreased by keeping a large part of it tied up watching the approaches to these islands when their services might be wanted on the frontiers of our Empire. What was required was the patriotic sacrifices of the people of this country now in order to train our troops here to be ready to meet any surprise attacking force, and it was the duty of the Secretary of State for War to see that our forces were sufficient for this. Members should not allow themselves to be carried away by the idea that because we had a strong Navy we were absolutely safe. The Army and the Navy should work together for the defence of the British Empire, but the safety of the British Isles depended upon having a sufficient force in this country equipped, prepared, and periodically exercised for the defence of these shores so as to be ready to meet any attack which might be sprung upon them without any warning, before even a declaration of war.

Mr. COURTENAY WARNER (Staffordshire, Lichfield) said he had always argued that extravagant expenditure upon the Army in times of peace, on things that were not absolutely necessary, was the way to cause weakness and to destroy the efficiency of the Army. The reduction which had been moved by his hon. and gallant friend declared that there should be some permanent and substantial reduction in the expenditure upon the Army. It was not a question of reducing a little piece here and there, and bringing the old system up in a more moderate form; they must take hold of some substantial piece of policy and promise definitely that there would be a substantial reduction, and something more than the lopping off of a few men from some of the battalions abroad and at home. They wanted something more than the taking away of a few guns from the fortifications of London. Many hon. Members had been returned pledged to economy, and their opinion was that there should be some means found of reducing a large proportion of the Army, and not of merely lopping off little corners. The Secretary of State for War had said that it was impossible to do away with the linked battalion system, because it necessitated the establishment of large depôts. They wanted nothing of the sort. They did not want the linked battalion system done away with, but they might very well adopt a system of two battalions at home and three abroad. They wanted some statement that the whole system would be modified in some way. He did not want to press the right hon. Gentleman too hard. They wished to give him a free hand, because they knew that he was an economist, but they wanted some definite guarantee that there would be some reduction of expenditure on the Army for the defence of this country, which was supposed to be defended by the Fleet. He believed that the Militia and the Volunteers were ample to defend this country, and to do garrison duty in most of the garrisons abroad when war broke out. We should never be called upon to face the enemy at once, because the strip of water around us would be sufficient protection for a few weeks whilst we made our partially trained men into competent troops.

*Mr. J. WARD (Stoke-on-Trent) said he wished to say a word or two on this question from the point of view of the working man. It seemed to him that, so far, it was largely the military idea that had been put before the House, but he wished to point out that there were other interests to be considered besides the interests of the Army. It was a well-known fact that for a number of years past the subject of international arbitration had been discussed at the Trade Unions Congress, and they had considered the progress made in providing machinery for submitting international disputes to international arbitration. That in itself was some justification for ordinary people supposing that a considerable reduction could reasonably be made in the standing Army. There were other reasons that one would naturally suggest. Looking at Europe it seemed to him that militarism was the great curse of all the nations, and this was a matter in which some one must take the lead. Was there any other Power in the whole of Europe which, owing to its geographical position, was in such a splendid position to take the lead as our own country?

And, it being half-past Seven of the clock, the Chairman left the Chair to make his Report to the House.

Committee report progress.

To sit again this evening.

EVENING SITTING.

RATHMINES AND RATHGAR EXTENSION AND IMPROVEMENT BILL (BY ORDER.)

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

MR. CLANCY (Dublin County, N.) said he rose to move that this Bill be read a second time this day six months. It offered an excellent example of how to do a thing without appearing to do it, or professing to do it. He could quite understand hon. Members unacquainted with Irish affairs reading the statement of this Bill and coming to the conclusion that it was a Bill which, on the face of it, ought to be sent to a Committee upstairs. But anyone acquainted with Irish affairs would readily see, on looking into the Bill, that the apparent object of it was by no means the real object. This was what was called an Annexation Bill. Annexation was a very favourite subject of legislation in this country. The annexation of districts for the purpose of extending the borders of the large urban areas which they adjoined had been the rule in this country for twenty years past. It was the practice of large cities which had outgrown their limits to annex adjacent areas. He might mention several specific instances which had occurred, but what he said would not be seriously disputed. In Ireland itself, Belfast had had its limits extended, and at this moment, in consequence of an annexation Act passed a few years ago, the boundaries of Belfast had been extended to include a large district which was still rural. Dublin had been treated in a very extraordinary fashion in this regard. Dublin had made repeated efforts to extend the limits of its municipal area over the very district which now promoted this Bill for annexation on its own account. Many years ago Lord Spencer, then Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, appointed a Commission to inquire into the question of the extension of Dublin, and the Commission reported that the annexation of all the townships and rural districts round Dublin should be sanctioned by Parliament. That Report was never acted upon, and every Bill put forward by Dublin to extend its areas was opposed by Rathmines, which now promoted this Bill. The last Bill brought forward by Dublin was with regard to the supply of water to Rathmines. Rathmines opposed the Bill upon grounds which had never been truly stated and which would not bear examination. They opposed it on political grounds; they would not have anything to do with Nationalist water. In Rathmines were concentrated the pink of perfection of the Orange faction south of the Boyne, and they refused to have anything to do with Dublin except to live on it. The shoddy aristocracy of Rathmines were content to live in villas near Dublin, but would have nothing to do with Dublin itself because it was a Nationalist city. He spoke for the Nationalist minority of Rathmines when he said that these people were not to be tolerated, and he hoped the House would not tolerate their demand to act apart from the City of Dublin. They opposed all annexation efforts on the part of Dublin. All the efforts of Dublin to do what Liverpool, Manchester, Birmingham, and all the great cities of England had been allowed to do by Parliament, had been opposed by Rathmines. It was a commentary on the way in which Irish affairs were dealt with in this House that while they had granted these facilities to all the municipalities of England which had asked for them, they would not grant them to the chief city of Ireland. Having done all this this urban authority came here last year with the audacious proposal now repeated in this Bill for the annexation of a rural district in the county of Dublin. The people of the county of Dublin protested against it and the overwhelming majority of the County Council of Dublin asked the House to reject this Bill. The object of this Bill was to raise, on the part of the Rathmines District Council, another barrier against annexation by Dublin, and to erect itself into a county borough and to free itself from the slight control at present exercised over it by the Nationalist County Council of Dublin, of which they had never made the slightest complaint, but which, nevertheless, they could not endure. The great argument in favour of these annexation proposals was that the district it was proposed to annex required drainage. In 1900 a joint Committee of both Houses discussed the question of the drainage of Dublin and the surrounding townships and rural areas of Dublin, and the Joint Committee arrived at the unanimous conclusion that it would be to the public advantage if there were one authority and one only to control the drainage and sewers of these townships, and they recommended that steps should be taken to construct a great drainage board. That was a proposal which Dublin was quite willing to carry out, but Rathmines and Pembroke refused to have anything to do with it and it was not carried out. It was not Dublin alone which sought to solve this difficulty. The district of Terenure, partly urban but mostly rural, had made more than one effort to procure an efficient drainage scheme for itself, and the persons who obstructed them in all their efforts were the Rathmines District Council. Terenure attempted to arrange with Rathmines to make use of their system, and for two years could not obtain a straight answer from them. Then they suggested that they should turn their sewage into the Dublin system. Here again they were opposed by the Rathmines District Council. What Rathmines wanted was not to drain Terenure but to obtain their money. The paper circulated among Members of the House said there was no alternative to the proposals of this Bill. That statement was false in the knowledge of those who made it. There was the city of Dublin scheme. Rathmines had a population of 30,000 and was only divided into two wards. The Dublin County Council had asked that those two wards should be again divided, so that there should be four wards, which would enable the voice of the Nationalist minority to be heard, but the Rathmines District Council refused, for the reason that if they accepted that the old practice of electing the board on two tickets would be defeated, and the Nationalist minority would be represented even on the present register. The Rathmines District Council had no moral authority to ask for this Bill. They were elected on a fraudulent franchise; upon the same franchise upon which the hon. Member for South Dublin was elected. The electoral list of South Dublin contained 1,500 lodgers, more than half the whole of the lodgers registered in all the counties of Ireland. There were 1,000 lodgers in Rathmines alone and 900 of those were bogus. Men one would never suspect, who wore respectable clothes and possessed large incomes, let out their houses for lodgings to their own sons and daughters. There were 1,000 bogus lodgers who were fraudulently on the register of South Dublin, and the voice of the hon. Member for that constituency ought not be heard upon this matter. This Bill was supported by sixteen Orangemen and was opposed by eighty-three Nationalist Members, and it was for the House to say which they would support. He moved that the Bill be read a second time this day six months.

*MR. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick) said he rose to second the rejection of this Bill, and he did so as a member of the Dublin County Council. As a registration worker he had had thirty years experience of Rathmines, and he asserted that there were more lodgers in South Dublin than in any other Irish constituency. They had them at all ages, from the perambulator stage upwards, and in all kinds of houses, from the cabin to the palace. But leaving the lodgers out of consideration for a moment he desired to show what the object of this Bill was. It was an annexation Bill with a political motive, and he unhesitatingly asserted the last session when this Bill got its second reading that means were adopted by the Front Government Bench which were altogether unconstitutionally irregular and unprecedented in regard to the passage of a Private Bill. The matter was not denied. Undoubtedly this Measure which was brought forward in the guise of a private Bill was a Measure for the purpose of carving out a constituency in a portion of South Dublin so that a Conservative Member might be returned. Surely a Liberal and democratic House of Commons was not going to lend itself to that kind of shilly-shally. As a member of the county council he had to say that Dublin had an objection to being dismembered or annexed. The district proposed to be annexed was one of the most valuable portions of the Dublin County Council area. It was only since the valuation had increased that it had become the desire of the Rathmines County Council to grab the rates, and that desire had been brought to a practical issue by the presentation of this Bill. The Bill would not have been read a second time last session if the House of Commons had been allowed to exercise discretion on the matter, as was usually done in the case of ordinary private Bills. He protested against any Government, Liberal or Conservative, using a private Bill of this kind for political purposes. He knew there were several hon. Gentlemen belonging to the dominant minority in Ireland who were in favour of this Bill. Majorities in other countries ruled, but irresponsible minorities ruled in Ireland. He knew the gentlemen of Rathmines. The Nationalists were kept out of the town hall on the occasion of the recent election because these people were afraid to let them in. He denied that the town hall belonged to any dominant minority. It belonged to the ratepayers. The Rathmines gentlemen knew that when the Nationalists got in anywhere they generally managed to stay there. He hoped the Liberal and democratic Members of this House were not going to allow themselves to be engineered for the purpose of upholding the Conservative minority in Rathmines in the peculiar position in which they had placed themselves by the clever manipulation of the franchise, and by the exercise of their municipal powers.

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out the word 'now,' and at the end of the Question to add the words 'upon this day six months.'"—(*Mr. Clancy.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

*Mr. JAMES CAMPBELL (Dublin University) said he did not propose to enter into controversy with the two hon. Gentlemen who had spoken. What he proposed to do was to let the House know what this Bill was, for, while up to the present moment they had heard a great deal of abuse of the loyal inhabitants of Rathmines, they had not received a particle of information as to the merits or demerits of the measure. He would undertake to satisfy the House that this was an ordinary sanitary measure brought up by the competent authority in such matters. The details of the Bill had already been approved by Committees of this House and of the upper House, and by this House itself by large majorities on two occasions. Before dealing with the merits of the Bill he desired to correct one or two statements made by the hon. and learned Member who moved the rejection of the Bill, and also by the hon. Member who seconded that Motion, with the view of endeavouring to create a prejudice in the minds of hon. Members opposite in regard to the measure. They were told by the hon. and learned Member for North Dublin that so bigoted was the urban district council of Rathmines that while they granted the use of the town hall in Rathmines to two supporters of the late Government they declined to give a similar indulgence to the Nationalist candidate and his friends. He thought his hon. and learned friend might have told the House that the use of that town hall was asked at a time when it was actually in the hands of carpenters and other people who were fitting it up as a polling booth for the election.

MR. CLANCY: They had two days to fit it up as a polling booth.

*MR. CAMPBELL repeated his statement and asked if the hon. Member did not think it would have been worth his while to mention that the Town Clerk of Rathmines published a letter saying he urged and requested the High Sheriff to grant the use of the hall, and he received a reply that he would have been delighted to comply, but the interval was too short.

MR. CLANCY: I regret to say that no such statement was made by the High Sheriff.

*MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member had a very quiet and patient hearing and he might listen to the hon. Member for Dublin University.

MR. CLANCY: I apologise for interfering so often. [AN HON. MEMBER "Sit down."] I will sit down when ordered by the Speaker, but not by you.

*MR. CAMPBELL said this only showed how unfortunate it was that the hon. and learned Member, instead of giving the House some information as to the details of the Bill should have thought it better to indulge in abuse of his political opponents and to drag into the controversy matters which had absolutely nothing to do with it. He would now direct the attention of the House to the fact that they were asked to do something for which no precedent could be found in the annals of Parliamentary procedure, and that was to reject on the Second Reading and refuse to allow to come before a Committee of this House in the ordinary way a Bill which in form and substance had already been ratified and adopted by the House. What were the facts? The township of Rathmines had practically since 1847 been growing up and daily increasing in strength and importance. It was now a township with its own water supply, its own drainage system, its own fire brigade, its public library, and all the equipments of a proper township. All that it had obtained and supplied without a shilling of aid or assistance from the adjoining city of Dublin, but on the outskirts of the township — there was this portion of the County of Dublin which it was sought by the Bill to annex. It contained about 660 acres of land, and there were upon it over 1,000 houses, containing a population of 5,000, and would the House believe — it was hardly credible, but it was an ascertained and undisputed fact—that the County of Dublin, who were responsible for the sanitary superintendence and supervision of this area, had never spent one shilling in the drainage or in providing any sanitary system for these 1,000 houses. In 1898 the inhabitants of these houses, driven to despair, proceeded to take the case into their own hands, and they diverted their sewage into the system of the adjoining Rathmines township. They had no right in law to do that, and the Rathmines Commissioners applied to the courts in Dublin and obtained an injunction against the occupiers of these houses continuing to drain their sewers to the Rathmines drainage system. They obtained their injunction, but they refused to enforce it, because if they had they would have left the inhabitants of these 1,000 houses without any drainage system whatever, and they would have been a constant menace and danger to the entire neighbourhood. Since 1898 these 1,000 houses had been drained in this way, but in addition to having been deprived of any sanitary system, there had not been a shilling of outlay incurred for the purpose of providing that area with any appliances in case of an outbreak of fire in these 1,000 houses, and if such an outbreak occurred, there was no provision for the protection of these inhabitants. Accordingly, last year a Bill was promoted and brought in by the Rathmines and Rathgar Commissioners. It had been suggested by the hon. Gentleman who seconded the rejection of the Bill that last session Lord Atkinson, who was then Attorney-General for Ireland, made a speech in support of the measure. There was not a particle of foundation for that statement. What the late Attorney-General did was to say that while the Government declined to express any opinion on the merits of the Bill, they thought the ordinary course should be followed of allowing it to be sent to a Committee of the House, where it could be discussed on its merits. The Bill was sent to a Committee, and they, by a unanimous vote, decided that it should be allowed to proceed. It then came down to the House for Third Reading. It was then stated, in opposition to the Bill, that it would be unjust to the Corporation of Dublin to pass it, because it did not provide for the purification of the sewage from the district before it went into the river Liffey. Another objection was that the Corporation of Dublin having laid down pipes and plant for the purpose of supplying the district with water were to be deprived of compensation for that. The promoters of the Bill suggested that it would be open to the Corporation of Dublin to bring these matters up when the Bill went to the House of Lords. The Bill passed the Third Reading by a large majority. Clauses were put in the Bill by the House of Lords to meet these two grievances. The Bill came back to this House in order that the Lords' Amendments might be considered, but the session came to a close before that could be done. He appealed to the House to allow the Bill to go before a Committee.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Louth, N.) said there was a precedent for what the House was now asked to do in the course followed in 1886 in regard to the Dundalk Gas Bill. Every Member of the present Government supported them on the last occasion. The Member for Trinity College had said that Rathmines had got an injunction against Terenure which they were seeking to absorb to prevent the sewage draining into their sewage works. Under what circumstances did they get the injunction? On the oath of their engineer, who swore before the High Court in Dublin that if they were allowed to drain into the Rathmines draining system it would be flooded, and the same engineer swore before Sir J. Brunner's Committee that the same sewers would contain twice the sewage. Another piece of expert engineering. Having got an injunction in order to induce the unfortunate inhabitants to take the Rathmines sewage arrangements and the Dublin water supply, they said "We will allow you to empty your water-closets into our sewers if you take our water, nothwithstanding the injunction." The whole question really came to this. It was reducing politics in Ireland to its proper basis. The question for the House was whether Nationalist sewage of Dublin had been allowed to be purified in the penstock of the Protestants. The object of this Bill was to enable the Conservatives of Rathmines to have purification of their own. He respectfully asked the House that, as every individual Irishman except the Conservatives were in favour of the extension of Dublin and the absorption of this district on the ground of cheapness, cleanliness, and sanitation, no further letters of marque should be given to Rathmines to prey upon the body politic of Dublin.

SIR EDWARD CARSON said that perhaps the House would allow him as a ratepayer of Rathmines and a voter in that constituency to say a word in reply. No one had a greater admiration for the hon. and learned Member who had just addressed the House. He was one of the heroes of Ireland. He told them that he had been waiting for twenty years, in hero-like fashion, to have this full day of revenge in a democratic House of Commons. He selected as the occasion the introduction of a Bill to drain and provide proper sewerage for 5,000 of the inhabitants of the County of Dublin. He did not believe that the Bill would have received such treatment in any country outside Ireland. There was nothing to be considered except whether 1,000 houses in a certain district ought to be properly drained by the Rathmines township—absolutely nothing else in the Bill, and the exceptional course was taken of asking the House to say that that was not a matter which need be inquired into before a Committee of the House. The hon. Member said why should the House accept the rinsings of Toryism? He included in that the hon. Members for Stroud and Norwich who sat on the other side of the House. Was the House deliberately going to reject the Bill on Second Reading without referring it to Committee after the merits of the Bill had been approved by those two hon. Members? Was the House going to refuse to allow the matter even to be inquired into. He should hardly think that hon Members believed there was any mandate from the constituencies to reject an ordinary sewage Bill because it had reference to a Unionist constituency in Ireland and was opposed by a Nationalist constituency. It might be for all he knew one of the matters which were supposed to lead up to the larger policy. Let it not be laid down in the very inception of this Parliament because a Unionist township asked for a sewage Bill to be inquired into by the House that therefore it was to be rejected. Let them understand the situation thoroughly in Ireland. He should have thought that on an occasion of this sort they might have had a word from the Chief Secretary or the Attorney-General who knew the district as well as any man. As they would give no information they were driven back to refer to the proceedings that took place before the previous Committee. He supposed that every Bill of this kind in the future would be regarded by the House as containing all the elements for a political squabble. If that was so all Bills which came from any district in Ireland ought to be treated in the same way, and they undoubtedly would be. Thus they would see what would be the progress of Ireland under a Liberal Government.

Mr. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford) asked the House to allow him to point the moral of this incident. Here was a great Imperial senate and they were engaged in discussing the question of the local sewerage of a township in Ireland. Let the House consider the situation. The Members of the new Parliament had come there full of enthusiasm to push forward measures of Imperial reform and their time was occupied with the discussion of a sewerage question relating to an Irish township. Pointing the moral as he did by showing the absurdity of the present system of Government in Ireland, he asked the House to support the case of the overwhelming majority of the Irish Members in this House.

Mr. BYLES (Salford, N.) wished to emphasise the protest made by the Leader of the Irish Party. He knew nothing about Rathmines or Terenure, but he was going to vote with the majority of the Irish Party because he thought it was high time that all questions in regard to the sewerage of Irish towns should be settled not by an English but by an Irish Parliament.

Question put.

The House divided: — Ayes, 73; Noes, 282. (Division List No. 15.)

AYES.

Acland-Hood,RtHn SirAlex.F.
Allen, Charles P. (Gloucester)
Anstruther-Gray, Major
Arnold-Foster, Rt. HnHugh O.
Aubrey-Fletcher,Rt.Hn Sir H.
Balfour, Capt. C. B.(Hornsey)
Baring, Hon. Guy (Winchester)
Barrie, H.T.(Londonderry, N.)
Beach, Hn. Michael HughHicks
Beauchamp, E.
Bridgeman, W. Clive
Brunner,J.F. L. (Lancs., Leigh)
Butcher, Samuel Henry
Campbell, J.H.M.(DublinUniv.
Carlile, E. Hildred
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cave, George
Cavendish, Rt.Hn. Victor C.W.
Cecil, Lord John P. Joicey-
Chance, Frederick William
Channing, Francis Allston
Clarke,SirEdward (CityLondon
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. F.
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow
Craig, CaptainJames (Down,E.
Dalrymple, Viscount
Davies, David(MontgomeryCo.
Duncan,Robert (Lanark,Govan
Forster, Henry William
Gibbs, G. A. (Bristol, West)
Gordon,SirW. Evans-(T'rHam.
Haddock, George R.
Hamilton, Marquess of
Hedges, A. Paget
Helmsley, Viscount
Hobhouse, Charles E. H.
Houston, Robert Paterson
Kennaway Rt.Hn. Sir John H.
Kenyon-Slaney,Rt Hn. Col.W.
Keswick, William
Lee,Arthur H.(Hants,Fareham
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Liddell, Henry
Lockwood, Rt.Hn.Lt.-Col.A.R.
Lupton, Arnold
Lynch, H. B.
Magnus, Sir Philip
Meysey-Thompson,Major E.C.
Montgomery, H. H.
Nicholson, Charles N.(Doncastr
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Paulton, James Mellor
Pease,Herbert Pike(Darlington
Ridsdale, E. A.
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Sloan, Thomas Henry
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (Strand)
Soares, Ernest S.
Stanley, Hn A.Lyulph(Chesh.)
Starkey, John R.
Talbot,Rt.Hn.J.G.(Oxf'dUniv.
Tennant, H. J. (Berwickshire
Thornton, Percy M.
Walker, Col.W.H.(Lancashire)
Walrond, Hon. Lionel
Whitbread, Howard
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
Whitehead, Rowland
Williamson, G. H. (Worcester)
Wilson, Henry J. (York, W. R.)
Wortley, Rt. Hn. C.B. Stuart-
Wyndham, Rt Hon. George

Tellers for the Ayes — Mr. Lonsdale and Mr. Charles Craig.

NOES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
Acland, Francis Dyke
Alden, Percy
Ambrose, Robert
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Astbury, John Meir
Baker, Joseph A.(Finsbury, E.)
Balfour, Robert (Lanark)
Baring, Godfrey (Isle of Wight)
Barker, John
Barlow, Percy (Bedford)
Barnard, E. B.
Barnes, G. N.
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Beale, W. P.
Bell, Richard
Bellairs, Carlyon
Benn, John Williams(Devonp'rt
Benn, W.(T'w'rHamlets, S. Geo.
Berridge, T. H. D.
Bertram, Julius
Bethell, J.H.(Essex, Romford)
Bethell, T. R. (Essex, Maldon)
Billson, Alfred
Birrell, Rt. Hon. Augustine
Black, Arthur W.(Bedfordshire
Boland, John
Bolton, T. D. (Derbyshire, N.E.
Bottomley, Horatio
Brace, William
Branch, James
Bright, J. A.
Brocklehurst, W. D.
Brooke, Stopford
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Buckmaster, Stanley O.
Burke, E. Haviland-
Burns, Rt. Hon. John
Burnyeat, J. D. W.
Burt, Rt. Hon. Thomas
Byles, William Pollard
Cairns, Thomas
Cameron, Robert
Carr-Gomm, H. W.
Causton, Rt. Hn Richard Knight
Cherry, R. R.
Clarke, C. Goddard (Peckham)
Cleland, J. W.
Clough, W.
Clynes, J. R.
Coats, Sir T. Glen(Renfrew, W.)
Cogan, Denis J.
Collins, Stephen (Lambeth)
Collins, Sir Wm.J.(S.Pancras, W
Cooper, G. J.
Corbett, CH (Sussex, E.Grinst'd
Cotton, Sir H. J. S.
Cowan, W. H.
Cox, Harold
Craig, Herbert J. (Tynemouth)
Crean, Eugene
Cremer, William Randal
Crooks, William
Crossfield, A. H.
Crossley, William J.
Davies, Timothy (Fulham)
Delany, William
Devlin, Chas. Ramsay (Galway)
Dewar, Arthur (Edinburgh, S.)
Dickinson, W.H. (St.PancrasN.
Dickson-Poynder, Sir John P.
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Dillon, John
Dolan, Charles Joseph
Donelan, Captain A.
Duckworth, James
Duncan, C. (Barrow-in-Furness
Dunn, A. Edward (Camborne)
Dunne, Major E. M. (Walsall)
Edwards, Enoch (Hanley)
Elibank, Master of
Ellis, Rt. Hon. John Edward
Esmonde, Sir Thomas
Essex, R. W.
Eve, Harry Trelawney
Everett, R. Lacey
Faber, G. H. (Boston)
Fenwick, Charles
Ferens, T. R.
Ferguson, R. C. Munro
Ffrench, Peter
Field, William
Fiennes, Hon. Eustace
Findlay, Alexander
Flynn, James Christopher
Fuller, J. M. F.
Fullerton, Hugh
Furness, Sir Christopher
Gilhooly, James
Gill, A. H.
Ginnell, L.
Gladstone, Rt Hn Herbert John
Glover, Thomas
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Gooch, George Peabody
Greenwood, G. (Peterborough)
Greenwood, Hamar (York)
Guest, Hon. Ivor Churchill
Gulland, John W.
Haldane, Rt. Hon. Richard B.
Halpin, J.
Hammond, John
Harcourt, Rt. Hon. Lewis
Hardie, J. Keir(Merthyr Tydvil)
Harmsworth, Cecil B. (Worc'r)
Harrington, Timothy
Hart-Davis, T.
Harwood, George
Haslam, James (Derbyshire)
Haworth, Arthur A.
Hazel, Dr. A. E.
Hazleton, Richard
Healy, Timothy Michael
Henderson, J.M (Aberdeen, W.)
Henry, Charles S.
Herbert, Colonel Ivor(Mon., S.)
Higham, John Sharp
Hobart, Sir Robert
Hodge, John
Hogan, Michael
Holden, E. Hopkinson
Hope, W. Bateman (SomersetN
Horniman, Emslie John
Howard, Hon. Geoffrey
Hunt, Rowland
Hyde, Clarendon
Jenkins, J.
Johnson, John (Gateshead)
Johnson, W. (Nuneaton)
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Jones, William (Carnarvonshire
Jowett, F. W.
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kekewich, Sir George
Kennedy, Vincent Paul
Kilbride, Denis
Kitson, Sir James
Laidlaw, Robert
Lamb, Edmund Geo(Leominster
Lambert, George
Lamont, Norman
Law, Hugh Alexander
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid
Lea, Hugh Cecil(St.Pancras, E.
Leese, Sir Joseph F.(Accrington
Lehmann, R. C.
Lever, W. H. (Cheshire, Wirral)
Levy, Maurice
Lewis, John Herbert
Lloyd-George, Rt. Hon. David
Lough, Thomas
Lundon, W.
Macdonald, J. R. (Leicester)
Mackarness, Frederick C.
Maclean, Donald
Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
Macpherson, J. T.
MacVeigh, Charles(Donegal, E.)
M'Callum, John M.
M'Kean, John
M'Kenna, Reginald
M'Killop, W.
Maddison, Frederick
Manfield, Harry (Northants)
Marnham, F. J.
Mason, A. E. W. (Coventry)
Meehan, Patrick A.
Menzies, Walter
Micklem, Nathaniel
Molteno, Percy Alfred
Money, L. G. Chiozza
Morrell, Philip
Murphy, John
Myer, Horatio
Nolan, Joseph
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
Nuttall, Harry
O Brien, Kendal(TipperaryMid)
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Connor, James(Wicklow, W.)
O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
O'Donnell, C. J. (Walworth)
O'Kelly, Conor (Mayo, N.)
O'Kelly, James (Roscommon, N
O'Malley, William
O'Mara, James
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
Parker, James (Halifax)
Paul, Herbert
Pease, J. A. (Saffron Walden)
Philipps, Owen C. (Pembroke)
Pollard, Dr.
Power, Patrick Joseph
Price, Robert John(Norfolk, E.)
Priestley, W.E.B. (Bradford, E)
Radford, G. H.
Rainy, A. Rolland
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E.(Waterford)
Redmond, William (Clare)
Rees, J. D.
Rendall, Athelstan

Richards,Thomas W. Monm'th
Richards, T. F. (Wolverh'mptn
Richardson, A.
Rickett, J. Compton
Roberts, Charles H. (Lincoln)
Roberts, G. H. (Norwich)
Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Robertson, J. M. (Tyneside)
Robertson,SirG.Scott (Bradf'rd
Robinson, S.
Robson, Sir William Snowdon
Roche, Augustine (Cork)
Roche, John (Galway, East)
Rose, Charles Day
Runciman, Walter
Rutherford, V. H. (Brentford)
Scarisbrick, T. T. L.
Scott,A.H.(Ashton-under-Lyne
Sears, J. E.
Seddon, J.
Seely, Major J. B.
Shackleton, David James
Shaw, Charles Edw. (Stafford)
Shaw, Rt. Hon. T. (Hawick B.)
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Silcock, Thomas Ball
Simon, John Allsebrook
Smeaton, Donald Mackenzie
Snowden, P.
Stanger, H. Y.
Steadman, W. C.
Stewart, Halley (Greenock)
Strauss, E. A. (Abingdon)
Sullivan, Donal
Summerbell, T.
Sutherland, J. E.
Taylor, John W. (Durham)
Tennant, E. P. (Salisbury)
Thomas, David Alfred(Merthyr
Thorne, William
Tomkinson, James
Torrance, A. M.
Toulmin, George
Verney, F. W.
Waldron, Laurence Ambrose
Walker, H. De. R. (Leicester)
Walsh, Stephen
Walters, John Tudor
Ward, John (Stoke upon Trent
Wardle, George J.
Wason, John Cathcart(Orkney)
Waterlow, D. S.
Watt, H. Anderson
Wedgwood, Josiah C.
Weir, James Galloway
White, George (Norfolk)
White, J. D. (Dumbartonshire)
Whiteley, George (York, W.R.)
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Wiles, Thomas
Williams, J., (Glamorgan)
Williamson,A.(Elgin and Nairn
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid)
Wilson, J. H. (Middlesbrough)
Wilson, P. W. (St. Pancras, S.)
Wodehouse,Lord (Norfolk,Mid)
Woodhouse,Sir J T (Huddersf'd
Young, Samuel

TELLERS FOR THE NOES — Mr Clancy and Mr. Mooney

Words added.

Main Question as amended, put, and agreed to.

Second Reading put off for six months.

SUPPLY [2ND ALLOTTED DAY.]

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. EMMOTT (Oldham) in the Chair.]

ARMY ESTIMATES, 1906-7.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a number of Land Forces, not exceeding 204,100, all ranks, be maintained for the Service of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland at Home and Abroad, excluding His Majesty's Indian Possessions, during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1907."

Whereupon Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a number of Land Forces, not exceeding 194,100, all ranks, be maintained for the said Service."—(*Major Seely.*)

*MR. J. WARD, continuing his speech in support of the reduction, declared that there was a strong opinion among organised labour associations that much of the Army expenditure was unnecessary because it was useless and unproductive. He urged the Secretary for War to make a definite statement that retrenchment should begin with the least possible delay. £29,000,000 was a very considerable item, and, considering the geographical position of our country, we ought not to be called upon to spend such a large sum especially as Ministers had declared there was no danger of invasion. They should, he thought, have a definite statement from the Prime Minister as to what he was prepared to do in the direction indicated. Remarkable progress had been made during recent years in the principle of submitting questions of international dispute to arbitration. Since His Majesty came to the Throne, remarkable progress had been made in that direction, and he hoped there would be little fear, at least so far as European nations were concerned, that difficulties would arise hereafter that could not be settled by that means. The working-men of this country were not in favour of excessive expenditure on armaments. They looked with more distaste upon this form of expenditure than upon any other. They considered it to be largely useless, and totally unproductive. He had been struck, during the debate, by the variation in the views of experts on military matters. One set of experts thought it was not possible to reduce the home establishment, but that it might be possible to reduce the establishment abroad. Another set of experts took an altogether opposite view. That was generally the case with experts. They could generally get an expert opinion on either side of almost any subject, and it was for the commonsense man—the average man in the street—to decide between the experts, or so-called experts. He would agree with both sides, and he thought he was entitled to do so if officers of reputation differed so considerably. By this means he had expert opinion in favour of reducing both the home and foreign establishments. That perfectly satisfied him. An Army for a country like ours could only be for aggression. So far as he knew the history of his country, the Army had always been used for that purpose. [Cries of "Indian Mutiny."] We naturally thought the Indians were the aggressors, but no doubt the natives of India thought we were the aggressors. It depended upon which side one stood as to his point of view. He had been given to understand by the Prime Minister in the late Government it was not possible to successfully attack this country. He did not think it was. We relied very largely for our defences upon the Navy. The Army was for aggression, and therefore they were in favour of reducing it. Some time ago it was stated that this country had formed a strong alliance with Japan and that such alliance put a possible attack upon our Indian Empire outside the range of possibility. Of course if it were now declared that the treaty could have no such influence, then a good deal of reason for the alliance disappeared. Militarism was the curse of Europe. Democracy groaned under its intolerable burden. War, they believed, was wrong, and in the next generation that would be the opinion of the majority of civilised peoples. If it were wrong for two individuals to settle their disputes in the old brutal fashion of killing or murder, it was equally wrong for States or nations to do the same. They were told that it was absolutely necessary that they should become soldiers in order to defend this country, but he was confident that a happy and contented people under any circumstances, whenever the occasion arose, would always be ready and able to defend their liberty and homes.

*MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER (Croydon) said the speech of the hon. Member who had just spoken was not based upon knowledge nor did it greatly illuminate the subject. The Minister in charge of the administration of the Army had stated that he was fully conscious of the feeling of the House and the country in favour of a diminution of military expenditure, and he had also stated that he was dealing with a very difficult task and a very delicate organisation, and he asked for time in order to deal with that organisation in a way which would not do harm but good. The hon. Member who had just spoken had urged that prudence must not be exercised, that time must not be taken. He would ask the House to analyse those propositions. The hon. Gentleman had told the House he was against war. He supposed there was no Member of that House who would not say that he was against war. But the hon. Member had told them that the action of the British Army in India in repressing the mutiny was merely a question of the point of view. That was perfectly true. It was a question whether we or the sepoys were to be victorious. The hon. Member spoke of a peaceful nation having some method other than war of effectively resisting attack. If his principle had been adopted we should have lost India. There might be a code of ethics which would reconcile us to the loss of India, but there was no economic code which would reconcile the working people of this country to it. The hon. Member looked forward to a time when war would be abolished. He was old enough to remember the Civil War in the United States, and the discussions on it in this House. There was a great problem that was bound to be solved, and was capable of being solved only by a struggle for life and death. When the flag over Fort Sumter was fired on, the people of the United States had no hesitation and they fought for four years to establish a principle. They all knew the history of the great struggle for the unity and liberation of Italy. We fêted Garibaldi in the City of London, wrote odes to him, sent addresses to him, and hailed him as a God-created apostle of liberty. But it was only by war that the question could be settled, and it was because the French marched 180,000 men across the Alps and fought the battles of Solferino and Magenta and because the campaign of 1859 was followed by that of 1866 that Italy was liberated. Were they to say that we had now arrived at a time when that method of deciding a great issue had gone? Though the hon. Member desired that it should be gone, could he guarantee that it was gone? He could remember when a Liberal Minister told the assembled Parliament that the European sky was without a cloud, and six weeks later the war between France and Prussia broke out. Mr. Cobden proved in page after page that for economic reasons France neither could nor would go to war, and the assertion in regular succession was followed by the Crimean war, the Italian campaign, the Mexican campaign, and the Franco-German war. That was a prophecy just as well established by an appeal to general principles as that of the hon. Member for Stoke, and no doubt just as capable of drawing the cheers of hon. Members. The hon. Member had talked with scorn of expert opinion. In the matter of the heating of a kiln or the temperature of a fiery mine the hon. Member would not perhaps accept expert opinion as conclusive, but he would pay a great deal of respect to it, and he would not speak of it as he had just spoken of military opinion. There was a great deal of experience to which the world could go in the matter of these military questions. There were several nations who had said, "Let us cast aside our weapons and turn our sword into ploughshares." [Cries of "Which?"] Holland, Venice, and perhaps Austria before 1856 were cases in point. But when some nations had neglected military precautions, had other nations accepted the peaceable proclamation? Not at all. As long as there were nations preparing the whole of their manhood for war it was impossible for a nation such as ours to disarm, although we had no hostile intent against any European Power, The hon. Member for Stoke did not believe in his own theory, for he was in favour of naval preparation. If he believed in the protection of arbitration treaties, then he must say, "Down with the Army and down with the Navy." If he did not say that he was clearly inconsistent. The hon. Gentleman knew perfectly well that we could not afford to dispense with that protection. He agreed with the hon. Member on one point. He thought that there was great room for a reduction in the expenditure of the Army. But he did not agree that the hon. Member's method of arriving at that reduction was either wise or business-like. He felt strongly, however, that what the right hon Gentleman had saidwas the belief of every one who had hitherto had anything to do with the administration of the War Office in late years. Personally he had said over and over again in the House that there was room for a reduction in Army expenditure, and he had given evidence of the sincerity of his intention. Every year that he had been in office the *personnel* of the Army had been reduced. There had also been a reduction this year, and he was confident that there was room for a still larger reduction. Indeed he would let the House into a secret. Whether the right hon. Gentleman liked it or not, there must be a reduction in the Army. As there were 39,000 men coming out of the Infantry this year and probably a maximum of 22,000 going in, it need not surprise the House at all if at the end of twelve months the right hon. Gentleman came down and told the House he had effected a reduction in the infantry. He was most anxious, however, to see that the desire for the reduction should be made consonant with the interests of the Army. He had always held that they ought to reduce the infantry with the colours on the home establishment. The right hon. Gentleman had discussed the way in which that reform might be achieved. He did not altogether agree with the proposal of the right hon. Gentleman nor did he think on reconsideration the right hon. Gentleman would abide by the opinion which he now held. He believed the right hon. Gentleman would see that there was an incongruity, an absurdity almost, about his proposition to-night, and that the only method of reducing the Army was by rejecting the double battalions. The right hon. Gentleman had said a great deal about policy governing Army expenditure. Within limits he agreed, but to a certain extent he did not agree. There were always two parties to a policy, and in the history of wars he had always found that there was an aggressor, and that it was not always a matter of choice as to whether we should engage in a war or not. Whether we chose or not, we might be compelled to take part in a war; and he thought it was rather a curious proceeding to have a system which compelled us to make our Army policy correspond with the accident of our organisation. We had more battalions abroad than we had at home, and circumstances compelled us now to keep battalions in the Colonies. That might be described as the result of policy, and if the policy held, why were we to bend our policy, to distort our policy in order to keep up an artificial system? If it were true that our policy required a certain number of battalions in India and in the Colonies, then by the right hon. Gentleman's rule we must keep battalion for battalion in this country. The right hon. Gentleman made a mistake when he spoke about the battalions on short tour abroad. The battalions abroad in the Mediterranean and in South Africa were not battalions fit for war. If he examined the nominal roll of these battalions he would find that they would have to be strengthened by reservists to the extent of 400 and 500 men, owing to the need that would arise to bring home that number of men now serving in the battalions, and to send out five or six hundred men to take their places, so as to make those battalions fit for war. He thought the right hon. Gentleman would be quite right to reduce the number of the troops at home. With that policy he agreed. It was, however, an absolute fallacy to suppose that you could make war with scratch armies. If they broke up battalions as suggested, they would lose 400 trained officers—the one thing we wanted most—800 non-commissioned officers, 6,000 men in the reserve; and they would have to recreate those battalions the moment they came to war. What could be done was perfectly consistent with what the right hon. Gentleman had said. They could follow the example of the Navy. They could reduce the establishments for the battalions at home. They could have the equivalent of the skeleton crews of the Navy. They could keep those battalions in a position in which they would be reinforced and revived in time of war. Once destroy them, and they would be paralysed and utterly unable to recreate them for effective purposes.

The right hon. Gentleman had made a tremendous demand upon their confidence. They were prepared to honour that draft, and to give him time. But before finally allowing him to proceed upon his task, he would venture upon one word of caution. The right hon. Gentleman proposed to substitute for our Regular Army an incoherent, unorganised, undisciplined force, of which as yet they knew nothing, and of which even the skeleton had not been made apparent to their eyes. There were some of them who felt very anxious lest he should be led into destroying before he was able to replace. He believed there was no military opinion extant which supported the view that they could enter upon war with an amateur army, ill-officered, ill-supplied with non-commissioned officers, and ill-trained; and there was no military authority at all for the proposition that they could in haste create one. He had looked at the record of armies of that kind in the field. He had looked at the reports of the army of the Loire. That was an army levied *en masse*, and included men of some six months training under officers some of whom were Regular officers. This force took the field in the crisis of their country's fate. They were well led so far as their commanders went; but they were badly officered. They were fighting in their own country, they were in enormously superior numbers. He had before him General Chanzy's reports of what that army did. Occupying the strongest positions the country afforded, they were utterly destroyed and broken up, and their failure was explained by every authority by the youth and military inexperience of the men. As far as his power went, he should at all points press the right hon. Gentleman to tell them, before he took any step in the direction of making more unorganised armies, that he had behind him the military authority of anybody at all. He should want the right hon. Gentleman to tell them categorically that he had learnt from the officers of this country, or of any other country, that we could successfully engage in war with troops without adequate training, and without a full supply of officers—and officers not merely attached from time to time to casual battalions, or who were merely giving up a small portion of their time to the military profession. He would not press the right hon. Gentleman now, however. He knew well that this question was far too important to be discussed in one evening, and that the right hon. Gentleman himself would greatly dislike the House of Commons to be hurried in a matter of this kind. He knew the right hon. Gentleman would be patient with them and tell them, stage by stage, what changes he desired to make. The right hon. Gentleman had made a demand upon them which he believed every man of common sense in the House would consider a reasonable demand; he had asked that he should be allowed to give attention to the great problems before him, and had given assurances which he for one respected. If they accepted those assurances they would agree that the line the right hon. Gentleman had taken was the right one, that he must be allowed with patience and attention to study the problem, so that when he had studied it he would be able to apply his knowledge to the true benefit of the Army.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I am sure that those Members of the House who are new to these debates and who are not, like some of us, seasoned on the topics that have been discussed to-night must have been greatly interested by the close insight afforded to them into the intricacies of military organisation. They have had the cloudy mysteries of the wrongly-called linked battalions at one end of the long chain, and they have had the terror as to the North-West Frontier of India at the other, and from one of these extremes to the other rival opinion has raged. I think that the general discussion may have been of no small assistance to my right hon. friend; but, after all, we are only to-night beating the air, as it were, because the Minister in charge of these Estimates, with this tremendous task before him, has made an appeal to the House to have confidence in him, or, if that is too strong a word, to have patience with him while he examines the whole of these intricate problems and tries to arrive honestly and laboriously at the best organisation to give to the Army. There is no Army in the world which has to be fitted for such various uses as our Army, and therefore the problem exceeds in difficulty that presented to any other country. But my right hon. friend very properly disclaims any *parti pris* in the matter. I think the right hon. Gentleman who has just sat down attributed to him certain views upon this subject and upon that—not in any extreme way—but my right hon. friend has wisely kept himself free from any explicit expression of opinion;

he has only been a few weeks in office, and, as I have said, the curtain has been sufficiently lifted to-night to let the House see what a complicated business it is. My right hon. friend appealed to the House to help him lift this question of the organisation of the Army out of the region of Party controversy. I have often preached—it is not always practised, for, after all, we are all human—but I have often preached the doctrine that these Army questions—I mean purely definitely Army questions—ought to be treated between the two sides, or the half-dozen sides, if such there are, of the House without any reference to other topics on which we differ. My right hon. friend, in appealing to the House to give him that assistance, I think did right. But I am speaking only of the questions of organisation; when we get to the question of the strength of the force you should maintain, the nature of that force and the amount of money to be expended, that depends upon general policy, which is another matter altogether, as to which it is almost ridiculous to expect any close continuity such as you could have upon a strictly technical matter like the organisation of the Army. Let there be no doubt as to the ground we take on those questions of general policy which determine military expenditure. Our desire is to be as little provocative as possible, to make as little as possible inroads upon the reserves of the national resources. We desire to cultivate economy as much as possible. But let me look back upon the years through which we have passed, the ten years during which we have seen this military expenditure, Army and Navy, going up steadily year by year in a relentless course, and surely it is not possible, holding the views that we hold, not to endeavour, with all our might, to check that course of increasing expenditure, and, if possible, to reverse the stream. I say we are bound to strain every nerve to stop that growth of expenditure. It is not easy to check expenditure that has been going on so long. The habit of expenditure, the habit in the public services and in the public offices, as well as in this House, and expenditure of the sort which we have been witnessing, has this peculiarity —that one branch of it creates, or apologises for, and leads to another. And, therefore, as I say, it is about as much as we can do, in the initial stages at any rate, to prevent the further growth of the evil before we see how far we can go in cutting down the evil itself. My right hon. friend, I think the House will agree, has done well in that respect. He has, broadly, reduced the Estimates as he found them when he came into office by £1,500,000 or £2,000,000. That was no easy task, and it shows that my right hon. friend has an earnest anxiety in the direction of economy.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER made an interruption which did not reach the gallery.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: When my right hon. friend came into office he found that the Estimates proposed for the coming year were £1,750,000 greater in extent than the Estimates of the previous year.

*MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: I must really ask leave to interrupt the right hon. Gentleman. That is a very serious statement. The right hon. Gentleman found no Estimates prepared by me. He found, what a Minister always finds, a rough sketch of Estimates which are always furnished for the decision of the Minister. Do I understand the right hon. Gentleman to say that there has been a reduction on the Estimates of the previous years of £1,500,000? [MINISTERIAL cries of "Yes."]

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I repeat what I said. Of course, they were not the ultimate, final Estimates. [OPPOSITION cries of "Oh!"] The odd thing was that the Navy Estimates, upon which there was to be a reduction, were issued, no one knows for what reason, before the general election at a time of the year when no one expects the Navy Estimates to be issued. But the Army Estimates were not so issued. No doubt the Estimates I speak of were the sketch Estimates for the coming year—that is to say, the demands of the Department upon the Government, and my right hon. friend succeeded, by applying himself to it, and with the help of his military advisers, in wiping out that excess. But there have been some sweeping assertions made, even by friends of my own, in this debate which I accept and accede to, under limits. It is often said that the only way you can reduce Army Estimates is by reducing the men. Of course, reducing the men on a large scale is the easiest way of producing an effect on the Estimates. But there may be a less costly organisation of the same number of men, and in the administration there may be a great deal of saving to be effected. I think my hon. and gallant friend himself was a little too hard on the ha'porth of tar. He said, "You will always be spoiling the ship for a ha'porth of tar." If you carry that theory too far I am afraid there will be a great demand for tar, if they know that any excess in that article is to be regarded as perfectly harmless expenditure. I was brought up in the old school of Mr. Robert Lowe, who was a great economist and whom I have often heard from this place proclaiming, what I believe to be perfectly true, that although you do not deal with very large sums when you are saving on stationery and sealing wax and wafers, yet if you take no effort to save on the sealing wax and wafers you will be extravagant in other matters. Another thing which I do not agree with is this. I, like the rest of the world, am of the Blue Water school—that is to say, I am of opinion that the Navy is the main defence of these islands, and I yield to no reasonable person in a desire to maintain the Navy in all the strength and efficiency that are necessary. But when I hear people saying that the country will not grudge any money spent on the Navy, I cannot imagine a more foolish and more mischievous assumption. We have only to go back a year or two to see that large sums can be saved from the Navy Estimates which were alleged to be absolutely essential for the safety of the country. I do not say at present that that can be done now, but I do say that, whether it be the Navy or the Army, when we see an opportunity of saving money we will save it, and we will endeavour to reduce the heavy burden which, as we think, unduly presses on the taxpayers of the country. I hope that my hon. friend will not press this Motion to a division. Although I thoroughly understand his keenness in the matter, and although, while this constant yearly development of expenditure was going on such Motions as this were, in my opinion, perfectly justified, and would be justified in the case of this or any other Government, if they were prosecuting the same course of spending more and more upon these services, yet, when you get a Government here which declares that it will do all it can, and strain every nerve to cause great reductions in military expenditure, that its honour and good faith are bound up with its doing it, then I think it is a little hard that such impatience should be shown. We have only had a few weeks to consider the whole question, and as our policy is the policy of peace and economy, because we believe that to be the policy also of strength and efficiency—because that is our policy, and because I am conscious that we deserve a little more confidence than my hon. friend is showing us by this Motion, I trust I may ask for that

Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman.

confidence. I promise, on behalf of the Government, that we will do all we can to fulfil, not the pledges or promises that any one has made, but the professions that we have put forward and the principles which possess us in regard to these matters.

Mr. GUEST (Cardiff District) said there was no man who believed more firmly in the necessity for a reduction in the expenditure upon the Army than he. He would remind hon. Members who were not Members of Parliament some years ago that he was the first man to move a reduction in the expenditure upon the Army, and he yielded to none in his desire to effect a reduction in the military expenditure of the country. He had always agreed with the view that war was the most futile and ferocious of human follies. He hated and disliked war, and he agreed with the hon. Member for Stoke in his appeal in the direction of peace. He set great store upon the efforts which the Labour Party were making upon this question, for he believed that the efforts of the Labour movement the world over was more likely to ensure peace than all the best efforts of diplomatists in the past. He thought, however, that the intention of his hon. and gallant friend to divide on the reduction was ill-advised and hostile to the Government, and he appealed to him to withdraw the Amendment. If it was pressed to a division it ought to be resisted with all the force which the Government could command. He had looked upon this as a *pro forma* Motion, moved for the purpose of drawing the attention of the House to the great desirability of moving in the direction of a reduction both in the number of the Army and the expenditure upon it, and it never entered his head that it was going to be pressed to a division. The Secretary of State for War last week made a pronouncement which met with the approval of almost every section of the House, and he indicated in a way that left no room whatever for doubt that his object and the object of the Government was to effect a reduction in military expenditure. He thought that ought to be sufficient for them for the present. Seeing that the right hon Gentleman had been in office only some three months and that he had already given a great earnest of the direction in which he was moving, they ought to be satisfied with that. Personally, he should not be satisfied with a reduction of 10,000 men, because 50,000 was what he hoped they might see next year. At present the Secretary of State for War had gone as far as any reasonable man could expect in the short time he had been in office. He again appealed to the hon. and gallant Member for the Abercromby Division to withdraw his Amendment.

Mr. HUNT (Shropshire, Ludlow), who rose amid loud cries of "Seely, Seely," said that he was very glad to have heard the excellent speech made by the Secretary of State for War, and he was pleased to hear that he was in favour of a great national Reserve in case of emergency. In the present temper of the country he thought the only way in which they could get that great national reserve was by encouraging rifle and air-gun clubs. [Cries of "Oh, oh!" and "Divide, divide."] They need not trouble to interrupt because he intended going on till twelve o'clock. The Labour Members appeared to think that they could do altogether without war. He was afraid that they were altogether wrong. One Member of the Labour Party had gone almost as far as to say that if they were attacked they would not retaliate. [Cries of "No, no!"]

Mr. J. WARD: You had better attack me and see.

MR. HUNT said he wished to say that for some unknown reason man was made a fighting animal, and until they altered that they were sure to have war. [Cries of "Divide, divide."] The defence of this country was not a Party question, and every Socialist ought to say that he was ready to defend his country. [Renewed interruptions and cries of "Divide, divide."]

MR. KEIR HARDIE (Merthyr Tydvil), rising to a point of order, said he had twice overheard the hon. Gentleman use the expression, "I do not care a damn." He asked whether the use of such expressions was permissible.

THE CHAIRMAN said the expression did not reach him. It was quite disorderly.

MR. HUNT endeavoured to continue his speech, but the cries of "Seely" were renewed.

THE CHAIRMAN said that of course the hon. Member for Ludlow was in possession of the Committee, but he was sure the Committee desired to hear before 12 o'clock what course the hon. and gallant Member for the Abercromby Division of Liverpool wished to take.

MR. HUNT said that in the circumstances he would give way.

MAJOR SEELY said that, deeply as he regretted to have to differ from the Prime Minister and the Secretary for War in this matter, he felt bound to go to a division. He had proposed a reduction in numbers which meant a reduction in money of about one and a-third millions on Army Estimates amounting to £29,500,000. This Parliament had been returned for the purpose of introducing economy. He had asked that this reduction should take place not this year, but next year. Since, therefore, they had no assurance whatever that we should not start again on the £29,500,000 basis, he felt that he must divide the Committee. He did not suppose many Members would follow him into the lobby, but, if he went alone, he would still make his protest against extravagance.

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 56; Noes, 296. (Division List No. 16.)

AYES.

Baker, Joseph A. (Finsbury, E.)
Banner, John S. Harmood-
Barnes, G. N.
Bellairs, Carlyon
Bolton, T. D. (Derbyshire, N.E.)
Bottomley, Horatio
Brace, William
Byles, William Pollard
Channing, Francis Allston
Clough, W.
Clynes, J. R.
Cobbold, Felix Thornley
Cooper, G. J.
Cotton, Sir H. J. S.
Cox, Harold
Cremer, William Randal
Davies, Timothy (Fulham)
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Edwards, Enoch (Hanley)
Fenwick, Charles
Fullerton, Hugh
Hardie, J. Keir (Merthyr Tydvil
Haslam, James (Derbyshire)
Hodge, John
Hudson, Walter
Johnson, John (Gateshead)
Johnson, W. (Nuneaton)
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Jowett, F. W.
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid
Lea, Hugh Cecil (St. Pancras, E.
Lehmann, R. C.
Macdonald, J. R. (Leicester)
Macpherson, J. T.
Maddison, Frederick
Money, L. G. Chiozza-
O'Grady, J.
Parker, James (Halifax)
Pollard, Dr.
Richards, Thomas (W. Monmth
Richards, T. F. (Wolverh'mpt'n
Roberts, G. H. (Norwich)
Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)
Scott, A. H. (Ashton under Lyne
Seddon, J.
Sullivan, Donald
Summerbell, T.
Taylor, John W. (Durham)
Thomas, David Alfred (Merthyr
Thorne, William
Vivian, Henry
Ward, John (Stoke upon Trent)
Williams, J. (Glamorgan)
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid)
Wilson, J. H. (Middlesbrough)
Wilson, W. T. (Westhoughton)

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Major Seely and Mr. J. M. Robertson.

NOES.

Acland, Francis Dyke
Acland-Hood, Rt. Hn. Sir Alex.
Adkins, W. Ryland
Agar-Robartes, Hon. T. C.
Agnew, George William
Alden, Percy
Allen, A. Acland (Christchurch)
Allen, Charles P. (Gloucester)
Anstruther-Gray, Major
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster, Rt Hn Hugh O
Ashley, W. W.
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Asquith, Rt. Hn. Herbert Henry
Astbury, John Meir
Aubrey-Fletcher, Rt Hn. Sir H.
Balfour, Rt. Hn. A.J. (City Lond
Balfour, Robert (Lanark)
Baring, Godfrey (Isle of Wight)
Baring, Hon. Guy (Winchester)
Barker, John
Barlow, Percy (Bedford)
Barrie, H. T. (Londonderry, N.
Beach, Hn. Michael Hugh Hicks
Beale, W. P.
Beauchamp, E.
Beaumont, Hubert (Eastbourne
Beaumont, W C.B. (Hexham)
Beckett, Hon. Gervase
Benn, John Williams (Devonp'rt
Benn, W. (T'w'r Hamlets, S.Geo
Berridge, T. H. D.
Bertram, Julius
Billson, Alfred
Birrell, Rt. Hon. Augustine
Black, Arthur W. (Bedfordshire
Boulton, A. C. F. (Ramsey)
Bowerman, C. W.
Branch, James
Bridgeman, W. Clive
Brooke, Stopford
Brunner, J.F.L. (Lancs., Leigh)
Bryce, Rt. Hn. James (Aberdeen
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Buckmaster, Stanley O.
Bull, Sir William James
Burns, Rt. Hon. John
Burnyeat, J. D. W.
Butcher, Samuel Henry
Buxton, Rt. Hn. Sydney Charles
Cairns, Thomas
Caldwell, James
Cameron, Robert
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H.
Carlile, E. Hildred
Carr-Gomm, H. W.
Castlereagh, Viscount
Causton, Rt. Hn. Richard Knight
Cave, George
Cavendish, Rt. Hon. Victor C. W.
Cecil, Lord John P. Joicey-
Chamberlain, Rt Hn J.A. (Worc
Chance, Frederick William
Cherry, R. R.
Churchill, Winston Spencer
Clarke, C. Goddard (Peckham)
Clarke, Sir Edward (City London
Cleland, J. W.
Coats, Sir T. Glen (Renfrew, W.)
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Collins, Stephen (Lambeth)
Collins, Sir Wm. J. (S. Pancras, W
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Corbett, C. H (Sussex, E. Grinst'd
Cory, Clifford John
Courthope, G. Loyd
Cowan, W. H.
Craig, Charles Curtis (Antrim, S.
Craig, Captain James (Down, E.
Crooks, William
Crosfield, A. H.
Crossley, William J.
Dalmeny, Lord
Dalrymple, Viscount
Davies, David (Montgomery Co.
Dewar, Arthur (Edinburgh, S.)
Dickinson, W.H. (St. Pancras, N
Dickson-Poynder, Sir John P.
Duckworth, James
Duncan, C. (Barrow-in-Furness
Duncan, Robert (Lanark, Govan
Dunn, A. Edward (Camborne)
Dunne, Major E. M. (Walsall)
Edwards, Frank (Radnor)
Elibank, Master of
Ellis, Rt. Hon. John Edward
Erskine, David C.
Essex, R. W.
Eve, Harry Trelawney
Everett, R. Lacey
Faber, G. H. (Boston)
Fell, Arthur
Ferens, T. R.
Ferguson, R. C. Munro
Fiennes, Hon. Eustace
Findlay, Alexander
Forster, Henry William
Fuller, J. M. F.
Furness, Sir Christopher
Gibb, James (Harrow)
Gibbs, G. A. (Bristol, West)
Gill, A. H.
Gladstone, Rt. Hn. Herbert Joh
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Gooch, George Peabody
Gordon, Sir W. Evans-(T'r Ham
Grant, Corrie
Greenwood, G. (Peterborough)
Greenwood, Hamar (York)
Grey, Rr. Hon. Sir Edward
Guest, Hon. Ivor Churchill
Gulland, John W.
Haddock, George R.
Haldane, Rt. Hon. Richard B.
Hamilton, Marquess of
Harcourt, Rt. Hon. Lewis
Harmsworth, Cecil B. (Worc'r)
Harrison-Broadley, Col. H. B.
Hart-Davies, T.
Haslam, Lewis (Monmouth)
Haworth, Arthur A.
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Hazel, Dr. A. E.
Hedges, A. Paget
Helmsley, Viscount
Henderson, J.M. (Aberdeen, W.)
Henry, Charles S.
Herbert, Colonel Ivor (Mon., S.)
Hervey, F.W.F. (Bury S. Edm'd
Higham, John Sharp
Hill, Sir Clement (Shrewsbury)
Hill, Henry Staveley (Staff'sh.)
Hobart, Sir Robert
Hobhouse, Charles E. H.
Holden, E. Hopkinson
Hope, W. Bateman (Somerset, N.
Horniman, Emslie John
Horridge, Thomas Gardiner
Houston, Robert Paterson
Howard, Hon. Geoffrey
Hunt, Rowland
Hutton, Alfred Eddison
Hyde, Clarendon
Illingworth, Percy H.
Jones, William (Carnarvonshire
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kekewich, Sir George
Kenyon-Slaney, Rt. Hon. Col. W.
Keswick, William
Kincaid-Smith, Captain
Kitson, Sir James
Laidlaw, Robert
Lamb, Edmund G. (Leominster
Lambert, George
Lambton, Hon. Frederick Wm.
Lamont, Norman
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Lee, Arthur H (Hants., Fareham
Leese, Sir Joseph F. (Accrington
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Lever, W.H. (Cheshire, Wirral)
Levy, Maurice
Lewis, John Herbert
Liddell, Henry
Lloyd-George, Rt. Hon. David
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lough, Thomas
Lyell, Charles Henry
Lynch, H. B.
Mackarness, Frederic C.
Maclean, Donald
Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J.
M'Callum, John M.
M'Crae, George
M'Kenna, Reginald
M'Micking, Major G.
Mallet, Charles E.
Manfield, Harry (Northants)
Marks, G. Croydon (Launceston)
Marks, Harry Hananel (Kent)
Marnham, F. J.
Mason, A. E. W. (Coventry)
Masterman, C. F. G.
Menzies, Walter
Meysey-Thompson, Major E. C.
Micklem, Nathaniel
Molteno, Percy Alfred
Montagu, E. S.
Montgomery, H. H.
Morpeth, Viscount
Morrell, Philip
Newnes, F. (Notts, Bassetlaw)
Nicholson, Charles N (Doncast'r
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
Nuttall, Harry
O'Donnell, C. J. (Walworth)
O'Kelly, Conor (Mayo, N.)
Paul, Herbert
Paulton, James Mellor
Pearce, Robert (Staffs. Leek)

Pease, HerbertPike(Darlington
Phillipps,Col.Ivor(S'thampton
Philipps, Owen C. (Pembroke)
Price, Robert John(Norfolk,E.)
Priestley, W.E.B.(Bradford,E.)
Radford, G. H.
Rawlinson, John Frederick P.
Rea, Walter Russell (Scarboro'
Rees, J. D.
Rendall, Athelstan
Renton, Major Leslie
Rickett, J. Compton
Ridsdale, E. A.
Roberts, Charles H. (Lincoln)
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Robertson,Sir G Scott(Bradf'rd
Robinson, S.
Robson, Sir William Snowdon
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Rose, Charles Day
Rowlands, J.
Runciman, Walter
Rutherford, V. H. (Brentford)
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Scarisbrick, T. T. L.
Schwann, Chas.E.(Manchester)
Scott, Sir S. (Marylebone, W.)
Sears, J. E.
Shackleton, David James
Shaw, Charles Edw. (Stafford)
Shaw, Rt. Hon. T. (Hawick B.)
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Silcock, Thomas Ball
Simon, John Allsebrook
Sinclair, Rt. Hon. John
Smeaton, Donald Mackenzie
Smith, F.E.(Liverpool,Walton)
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (Strand)
Snowdon, P.
Soares, Ernest J.
Spicer, Albert
Stanger, H. Y.
Stanley, Hn.A.Lyulph(Chesh.)
Starkey, John R.
Stewart, Halley (Greenock)
Strauss, E. A. (Abingdon)
Stuart, James (Sunderland)
Sutherland, J. E.
Tennant, E. P. (Salisbury)
Tennant, H. J. (Berwickshire)
Thomson, W.Mitchell-(Lanark)
Tomkinson, James
Toulmin, George
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Verney, F. W.
Walker, Col.W.H.(Lancashire)
Walker, H. De R. (Leicester)
Walrond, Hon. Lionel
Walters, John Tudor
Ward, W.Dudley(Southampton
Wardle, George J.
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Wason, Eugene (Clackmannan)
Wason, John Cathcart(Orkney)
Waterlow, D. S.
Watt, H. Anderson
Wedgwood, Josiah C.
Whitbread, Howard
White, George (Norfolk)
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
White, J. D. (Dumbartonshire)
Whitehead, Rowland
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Wiles, Thomas
Williams, Osmond (Merioneth)
Williamson, A.(Elgin and Nairn
Williamson, G. W. (Worcester)
Wilson, A. Stanley (York, E.R.)
Wilson, C. H. W. (Hull, W.)
Wilson, Henry J. (York, W.R.)
Wilson, P. W. (St. Pancras, S.)
Winfrey, R.
Woodhouse, SirJT(Huddersf'd
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C.B.Stuart-
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Mr. George Whiteley and Mr. J. A. Pease.

While the original Question was being put—

MR. A. J. BALFOUR, seated and with his hat on, said: I desire to raise a point of order. May I respectfully ask whether there was not an arrangement at Question time, or, perhaps, an understanding arrived at, that this discussion should not terminate to-night? I do not desire to suggest that there is a question of bad faith or good faith, but——

THE CHAIRMAN: I must stop the right hon. Gentleman. This is not a point of order.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Quite true, it is not.

MR. HALDANE: May I say on that point——

THE CHAIRMAN: Order, order.

Original Question put, and agreed to.

And, it being after Midnight, the Chairman left the Chair to make his Report to the House.

Resolution to be reported upon Monday next; Committee to sit again upon Monday next.

SUNDAY TRADING.

Lords Message [12th March], communicating the following Resolution, "That it is desirable that a Joint Committee of both Houses be appointed to inquire into the subject of Sunday Trading," considered.

Resolved, That this House doth concur with the Lords in the said Resolution.

Message to the Lords to acquaint them therewith.—(*Mr. George Whiteley.*)

Adjourned at twenty minutes after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Friday, 16*th March*, 1906.

The House met at Twelve of the Clock.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Heacham Water Bill. To be read a second time upon Wednesday next.

Great North of Scotland Railway Order Confirmation Bill. "To confirm a Provisional Order under The Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899, relating to the Great North of Scotland Railway," presented by Mr. Sinclair; read the first time; and ordered (under Section 9 of the Act) to be read a second time upon Monday, 26th March, and to be printed. [Bill 106.]

Todmorden Corporation Bill. Reported from the Police and Sanitary Committee, with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

PETITIONS.

LAND VALUES (ASSESSMENT AND RATING BILL).

Petition from Hastings, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

PUBLIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS. (RELIGIOUS TEACHING.)

Petitions against alteration of Law; from Barton on Irwell; Blackburn (four); Bury (two); Church Kirk (two); Eastham; Finsthwaite; Granby (two); Halton West; Hampnett; Lower Darwen (four); Newchurch in Rossendale (two); Read; Road Hill; Royton; Stoke Row; and, Weaverthorpe; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY.

Petition from Hinton Blewitt, and other places, for prohibition; to lie upon the Table.

UNEMPLOYED WORKMEN ACT, 1905.

Petition from Falkirk, for alteration of Law; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS REPORTS, ETC.

PENAL SERVITUDE ACT, 1891.

Copy presented, of Regulation made by the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland under The Penal Servitude Act, 1891, Sections 8 and 9, for the taking of finger-prints and measuring and photographing prisoners [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

METROPOLITAN CATTLE MARKET.

Accounts presented for the year 1905, with an account of extraordinary work executed other than the general repairs for the same period [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

PENAL SERVITUDE ACTS (CONDITIONAL LICENCE).

Copy presented of a Licence to be at large granted to William Watson, to which are annexed conditions other than those contained in Schedule A of the Penal Servitude Act, 1864 [by Act]; to lie upon the table.

FACTORY AND WORKSHOP ACTS (DANGEROUS AND UNHEALTHY INDUSTRIES).

Copy presented of Regulations, dated 26th February, 1906, made by the Secretary of State for the Home Department, in pursuance of Section 79 of the Factory and Workshop Act, 1901, in respect of the processes of spinning and weaving flax and tow, and the processes incidental thereto [by Act]; to lie upon the table.

LABOUR BUREAUX.

Copy ordered, "of the Report made to the President of the Local Government Board by Arthur Lowry, esquire, one of the inspectors of the Board."—(*Mr. Runciman.*)

LABOUR BUREAUX.

Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 16th March; *Mr. Runciman*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 86.]

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Disfigurement of St. Alban's by Telegraph Poles.

MR. WILES (Islington, S.): To ask the Postmaster-General if he is aware that telephone posts are now being placed in St. Peter's Street, St. Alban's, thereby disfiguring one of the most beautiful streets in the home counties; and, if not, will he institute an inquiry as to an alternative route for these poles.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) I am giving attention to this matter, and if a practical alternative route can be devised I should be very glad that the trunk line should avoid St. Peter's Street. But so far the Corporation have been unable to obtain the necessary way-leaves for an alternative route.

Civil Service Examinations — Service Marks for Post Office Clerks.

MR. W. H. DAVIES (Bristol, S.): To ask the Postmaster-General if he will extend the privilege of service marks, now enjoyed by boy copyists in competing for the higher branches of the Civil Service, to clerks in Post Office employ competing in Civil Service examinations, in view of their irregular hours of employment and consequent lack of opportunity for study enjoyed by them.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) The question is one for the consideration of the Civil Service Commissioners. I regret that it is not in my power to deal with the matter. I have received a memorial on the subject from the staff at Portsmouth, and I am forwarding it to the Commissioners.

Letter Despatches at Mountain Ash.

MR. KEIR HARDIE (Merthyr Tydvil): To ask the Postmaster-General whether he can arrange for a later despatch of letters from Mountain Ash than 8.40 p.m.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) I will make enquiry on this subject and acquaint the hon. Member with the result.

Chinese Labourers — Inspectors of the Chinese Language.

SIR BRAMPTON GURDON (Norfolk, S.): To ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies what is meant in the Papers relating to labour in the Transvaal mines by the expression inspectors conversant with the Chinese language, seeing that in China there are many different languages totally differing from one another.

(*Answered by Mr. Churchill.*) The inspectors are required to be conversant with the northern dialect of Chinese, as the labourers have nearly all been brought from the north of China.

Railway Construction in British Honduras.

SIR WILLIAM BULL (Hammersmith): To ask the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies on what grounds the Colonial Office have again refused to confirm the proposals of the British Honduras Legislature for the construction of a railway to the western frontier of that colony; and whether he will lay upon the Table Mr. Shelford's Survey and Report to the Crown Agents which the Honduras Legislature have refused to entertain.

(*Answered by Mr. Churchill.*) Lord Elgin has not felt able, under existing circumstances, to sanction a subsidy to a proposal made to the British Honduras Legislature, and provisionally entertained by them, for the construction of a railway to the western frontier of the Colony, because, with other works of development on hand or in view and with the prospect of a considerable loan being required to carry out those works, his Lordship is of opinion that the Colony cannot undertake further obligations at the present time. This is apart from the merits or demerits of the scheme, which is only one of many of a similar nature which have been put forward from time to time. Mr. Shelford's Report, which was made in 1896, is now necessarily to some extent out of date; it can be seen at the Colonial Office library, but there would be no sufficient justification for incurring the expense of printing it for Parliament.

Regulations for Movement of Swine in Ireland.

Mr. T. M. HEALY (Louth, N.): To ask the hon. Member for South Somersetshire, as representing the President of the Board of Agriculture, whether he is aware that under the Order of 26th January, 1906, regulating the movement of swine from Ireland, no pig bought in a fair can be shipped to Great Britain, so that dealers are compelled to buy at the farmers' houses, and then go for a permit to the police barracks, often miles away, testifying that the animal has not been sold in a fair; and whether, seeing that as the police are often not able to make the inspection quickly before signing the licence, loss of time and friction arises, and journeying is imposed on the police and the dealers, he will say what number of cases of swine fever exist in Ireland to justify so stringent an order; and will the Government do anything to modify it at the earliest moment.

(*Answered by Sir Edward Strachey.*) The Order regulating the movement of swine from Ireland to Great Britain has recently been modified so as to permit of the importation of store swine from Ireland, under conditions which are practically identical with those imposed on the movement of swine from one part of Great Britain to another, under the Swine Fever (Regulation of Movement) Order of 1903. I am afraid that we cannot undertake further to modify the Order at the present time, but we will communicate with the Irish Department of Agriculture, with a view to ascertain whether the arrangements as to the counter-signature of declarations can be improved. Seven outbreaks of swine fever have been reported in Ireland during the nine weeks ended the 3rd instant.

Liabilities of Non-provided Schools.

Mr. RAWLINSON (Cambridge University): To ask the President of the Board of Education, what is the approximate amount of the annual liabilities borne by managers of non-provided schools in England and Wales since 1902.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) I am afraid I have no information on this subject.

Value of Non-provided Schools.

Mr. RAWLINSON: To ask the President of the Board of Education what is the estimated value of the non-provided schools in England and Wales.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) I am afraid I have no information in my possession which would enable me to give an accurate reply to the Question.

Heating of the Law Courts.

Mr. HERBERT (Buckinghamshire, Wycombe): To ask the First Commissioner of Works whether he is aware that, in building the Law Courts, provision was made in the structure for pipes to heat the corridors of the Chancery Chambers and the Admiralty Registry, but that no such system of heating has ever been installed; and whether, in view of the discomfort to those who have occasion to use those parts of the building, such a system of heating can be provided.

(*Answered by Mr. Harcourt.*) The programme for the ensuing year includes the extension of the heating to the places in question.

Richmond Park—Hours of Opening.

Mr. CAVE (Surrey, Kingston): To ask the First Commissioner of Works whether he has been requested to direct the carriage gates of Richmond Park to be opened at 6 a.m. during the summer months for the benefit of those who desire to take horse or bicycle exercise at an early hour; whether he is prepared to accede to such request, and, if not, whether he will explain for what reason the request is not entertained.

(*Answered by Mr. Harcourt.*) There has been no general request for the earlier opening of the gates during the summer months; and I should not be prepared to accede to any such request in view of the serious addition to the already long hours of the gatekeepers which would be involved thereby.

Salary of Acting Physician to Youghal Lunatic Asylum.

Mr. GILHOOLY (Cork County, W.): To ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether it is proposed to fix the salary of the acting physician to the Youghal

Auxiliary Lunatic Asylum at £100 per annum, for a limited time; and whether the board of governors are to have any control in determining the amount of this salary.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The power of fixing the salary of the visiting physician to this institution is vested by statute in the committee of management, subject to the concurrence of the Lord-Lieutenant. The Committee have fixed the salary at £100 per annum, with the proviso that the physician may, after eight years' satisfactory service, receive an increase not exceeding £25 per annum. The Lord-Lieutenant, however, has not yet signified his concurrence, owing to the fact that certain temporary difficulties have arisen in framing regulations for the management of the institution.

Annuities expiring during 1906-7.

MR. D. A. THOMAS (Merthyr Tydvil): To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer if he can state the aggregate amount of annuities now charged against the fixed annual sum set aside for the service of the National Debt, which will expire in the course of the next financial year; and if he can give the respective amounts of such terminable annuities, and the dates when they expire.

(*Answered by Mr. Asquith.*) Only one annuity will expire in 1906–7. That is the Chancery Funds Annuity under the Act 46 and 47 Vic., c. 54. It amounts to £2,324,516, and the last quarterly instalment will be payable on July 5th, 1906. Two other annuities, known as the Converted Annuities, under the same Act, came to an end last month. One amounted to £362,104, of which the last payment was made on February 15th, 1906, the other to £321,918, of which the last payment was made on February 22nd, 1906.

Nomination of Land Tax Commission.

MR. SEARS (Cheltenham): To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether Members of the House have the privilege of nominating persons for appointment as land tax commissioners; and, if so, at what time and under what conditions.

(*Answered by Mr. Asquith.*) Commissioners of land tax are appointed, as occasion requires, by special Acts of Parliament, called "Land Tax Commissioners' Names Acts." The last Act was passed in 1899. Names are inserted in a Schedule deposited with the Clerk of the House of Commons, which is printed in the *London Gazette*. This Schedule is made up of lists of names delivered by Members of the House to the Public Bill Office, in accordance with a Resolution of the House passed after the Second Reading of the Bill (*e.g.*, Resolution of 17th July, 1899). It has long been the practice of the Board of Inland Revenue, though they are under no statutory obligation to do so, when such Bill is introduced, to send a circular to each clerk to commissioners of land tax suggesting that he should draw up a list of suitable persons and send it to the Member for his division, with a request that, if the Member do not disapprove the names, he will sign it and deliver it to the Public Bill Office. In practice this procedure is, I understand, generally followed.

Additional Railway Sidings on the Burtonport Railway.

MR. LAW (Donegal, W.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the attention of the Board of Works has been drawn to the necessity for the provision of an additional station or siding on the Burtonport Railway for the accommodation of the fish traffic from the new harbour at Kincaslough; and whether, seeing that the Lough Swilly Company, being the working company, have signified their willingness to pay for half the cost of construction and maintenance, but that the Board of Works has declined to co-operate, and in view of the growing importance of this fishery, he will take steps to induce the Board of Works to reconsider their attitude.

(*Answered by Mr. McKenna.*) The Answer to the first part of the Question is in the affirmative. I am informed that the proposed new station would cost at least £2,000, and that, if erected, it would effect a saving in cartage of only one mile five furlongs, viz., from five miles three furlongs (the distance from Burtonport to Kincaslagh) to three miles six furlongs. So far as I have been able to ascertain, only about 50 tons of fish were carted last year from Kincaslagh to Burtonport, the remainder of the catch having been sent there by sea, and I see no reason for supposing the proposed station would make any considerable difference in this respect. In these circumstances, and in view of the benefit already accruing to the company from the large expenditure of public money at Gortnasate (Kincaslagh), I am of opinion that if the station is desired by the company it should be provided by the company out of its own resources; and I am not prepared to accede to the hon. Member's request.

Examination for Cadetships in Royal Irish Constabulary.

MR. SLOAN (Belfast, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether it is intended to hold an examination shortly for cadetships in the Royal Irish Constabulary; and if there are no head constables eligible to fill these positions.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) An examination for two cadetships in the Royal Irish Constabulary will shortly be held. Under the existing regulations, half of the vacancies for district inspectorships are filled by competition among gentlemen nominated for examination, and half by the promotion of head constables. The forthcoming examination will be in accordance with the regulations.

Royal Irish Constabulary.

MR. SLOAN: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether the cost of commanding the Royal Irish Constabulary force averages about £3,500 per county per annum; and, if so, will he cause a general inquiry into the contitution and organisation of the establishment, with a view to an adjustment of the pay and prospects of the various grades composing the force coupled with economy of expenditure.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The cost of officering the Royal Irish Constabulary averages about £2,690 per county per annum. The question of gradually reducing this cost is under the consideration of the Government, but no inquiry upon the subject is thought necessary.

Protestant Constables in County Tipperary.

MR. SLOAN: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the entire force of Royal Irish Constabulary, stationed in Tipperary, are Roman Catholic, and if he will consider the advisability of placing a due proportion of Protestant constables in the county.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) I am informed by the Inspector General that all the members of the force now stationed in Tipperary are Roman Catholics. There are no Protestants just now available for Tipperary without detriment to the public service or needless hardship to the Protestant members who would have to be transferred, but the Inspector General will bear the matter in mind.

Summons-Server for Warrenpoint District, Kilkeel, County Down.

MR. McVEAGH (Down, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the Education Act cannot be enforced in the Warrenpoint district of Kilkeel Union, county Down, owing to the fact that there is no summons-server in connection with the Warrenpoint petty sessions; and what steps he proposes to take in the matter.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The appointment of a summons-server rests with the magistrates of the district. I am informed that the post of summons-server at Warrenpoint has been vacant for some time. In such case, summonses may be served with the permission of the magistrates by any person whom the complainant may employ, 14 and 15 Vic., c. 93, s. 12 (2), and 41 and 42 Vic., c. 69, s. 10. It is open to the school attendance inspector to adopt that method of procedure.

Promotion of Irish National School Teachers.

MR. JAMES O'CONNOR (Wicklow, W.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the

Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will see that the vested interests of existing teachers in national schools will not be injured by the enforcement of Rule 127*b*, and that the promotion and increments of principal teachers, and the retention and emoluments of assistant teachers will be based on the present averages in attendance in such schools.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The interests of teachers of schools which may be amalgamated have been safeguarded, as far as possible, by a regulation made by the Commissioners of National Education, with the approval of the Irish Government and the Treasury. This Regulation provides that where two separate boys' and girls' schools are amalgamated, and the principal of the separate girls' school is retained as assistant in the amalgamated school, grants for such assistant shall be available, even though the average attendance may not be fifty, and salary shall not be withdrawn from such privileged assistant on account of insufficient average attendance.

Army Pension of Richard Merry.

MR. W. BENN (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether he will consider the case of Richard Merry, of Spencer Street, St. George's East, formerly a private in the 77th regiment of infantry, who was present at the siege of Sebastopol, receiving a Crimean medal and clasp for Sebastopol, and was subsequently discharged as unfit for further service, with a view to providing a pension for him, considering his present reduced circumstances; and whether there is any fund for Crimean veterans or other from which Merry might receive relief.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) If this man will apply to the Secretary, Royal Hospital, Chelsea, his case will be duly considered.

Promotion of Colour Sergeants to the Permanent Staff.

MR. SLOAN: To ask the Secretary of State for War whether, in view of the fact that colour sergeants serving on the permanent staff are generally selected from the senior of that rank in the Line battalions, as being steady and reliable men, he will take steps to ensure that when vacancies for promotion take place in the Line battalions, these non-commissioned officers will receive due consideration, instead of being passed over as at present.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) If the hon. Member will kindly refer to the detailed instructions on this subject contained in the King's Regulations he will find that there is no regulation to prevent colour sergeants of the permanent staff being considered for promotion to higher rank in the Line battalions. Promotion to warrant rank will in future require the approval of the officer in charge of records, and this change in system will probably tend to equalise promotion in a corps.

MR. SLOAN: To ask the Secretary of State for War whether, seeing that the pay of colour sergeants of Line battalions has been increased by 6d. per diem, he will take steps to have the pay of colour sergeants serving on the permanent staff of Militia battalions increased in the same manner; and if, having regard to the fact that in most cases these non-commissioned officers are posted to the staff contrary to their wishes, by virtue of seniority and service, he will take steps to have this grievance remedied.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) As regards the first part of the Question, the emoluments of colour sergeants on the permanent staff of the Militia have always been less than those of similar rank in the Line, owing to the different nature and amount of their work and the responsibility involved. It is not, therefore, considered practicable to adopt the hon. Member's suggestion. As regards the second part of the Question, all non-commissioned officers who have the qualifying service laid down in the King's Regulations are liable to be posted to the permanent staff. Lists are also kept of such non-commissioned officers who are desirous of being so posted. Should a vacancy arise to which no non-commissioned officer is desirous of being posted, it is necessary to enforce the regulation, the selection being made, as far as possible, in order of regimental seniority.

PURE BEER BILL.

Order for Second Reading read.

*MR. COURTHOPE (Sussex, Rye), in moving the Second Reading of this Bill, said he would try to say a few words about it without being too scientific or technical, for if one went in for all the technical and scientific aspects of the question of brewing there would be very few Members of the House who would understand it, and he was afraid he should not be one of the number. He thought everyone who had read the Bill would agree that it was a very moderate measure, and would involve less scientific discussion than the Bill of 1902. It would be noticed that he had made no attempt in it entirely to exclude the use of sugar in brewing. Acting on expert advice, the promoters had provided that 85 per cent. of the saccharine-yielding material used in the brewing of barley beer should be barley malt, leaving 15 per cent. for the sugar. It was to some extent a matter of opinion still; but he thought the general opinion was that 15 per cent. of sugar was sufficient for all practical purposes. Sugar was not necessarily injurious in brewing. He did not suggest that it was; indeed, if he did, he did not think he should be justified in allowing sugar to be included at all among the brewing ingredients in this Bill. But of one thing there was no doubt—that sugar was less nutritious than barley malt, producing, as it did, alcohol and carbonic acid gas, and very little else; and that was not what was wanted in beer. He did not know why they should not have beer pure under the Bill—they liked it pure in the pot. The principle of this measure could be best expressed in the words of one very important witness, who gave evidence before the Brewing Materials Commission a year or two ago. He was a brewer, and these were his words—

> "The most essential point, I maintain, is that the public should have a right to know what they are purchasing when they think they are buying beer, and that a man, when he sells beer, should be under an obligation that he should declare that what he sells—or it should be known without declaration—that what he sells is of the nature and substance demanded."

He did not wish to go beyond that, but he said that when a British working-man or anyone else, who wanted to drink beer of a certain standard of purity, took the trouble to demand it, he should have a right to be supplied with it. Let the brewers use what they liked, so long as the public knew what they were drinking, and had a recognised right to obtain what they wanted. The present definition of beer was a very wide one. It was laid down by the Inland Revenue Act of 1880 and was extended in 1885, and included ale, porter, spruce, beer, black beer, etc., and also "anything sold as beer or a substitute for beer, which contained more than 2 per cent. of proof spirit." So the net result was that if a bar-tender or waiter was sufficiently unscrupulous to offer a customer something he described as beer, so long as it contained 2 per cent. of proof spirit, he might do so—and every alcoholic drink and almost every teetotal drink would come under this description. He did not think that was a desirable thing. If a man wanted a pint or a pot of beer brewed from barley, malt, and hops—he thought he was drinking it now, but he was not—and if he took the trouble to demand it, power should be given him to obtain it. Among the advantages which this Bill would bring to the public, he held in the first place that it was in the cause of temperance. The whole House would agree with him in saying that one of the greatest causes of intemperance in this country was the inferior type of tied houses, and if they looked at this Bill carefully they would see that it was only that low type of tied house. and the low-class brewers who depended for their profits on those houses, who would be affected in the slightest degree by this Bill. It was a matter of very general knowledge that it was this low type of house which did so much to fill the workhouses, asylums and prisons. Anything they could do to prevent that and to decrease the ill-effects of bad beer would, he maintained, be a social reform that ought to be supported by this House, and this Bill would have that effect. There was another reason. The tied house system was to his mind the very worst form of protection, and surely a free trade Parliament would do what it could to alter it if only on that ground. It was not consistent with the principles of free trade that these tied houses should exist as they did, and he put that as one strong argument in favour of the Bill. Let them look, for the moment, at the standard of purity which prevailed abroad. In Belgium the standard of purity was higher than that which was laid down in this Bill, and there were far fewer habitual drunkards there than in this country. In Bavaria Pure Beer Acts had been in force since 151ι, and they had been brought up to date by periodical subsequent enactments, and Bavaria was noted for the temperance of its inhabitants. In the case of Germany he did not say that the people of that country did not drink beer—they drank it in large quantities—but they did not get drunk on it, and it did not have a bad effect on their health or system. In Germany a standard of beer purity was laid down in all cases except that of beer for export. The authorities allowed any chemicals to be used in their exported beer, but they laid down a standard of purity for beer that was to be drunk at home. Some time ago there were issued some figures of comparison in relation to the relative temperance of Berlin and Birmingham. The average consumption of beer in Berlin was greater than in Birmingham, but the average number of habitual drunkards per thousand was thirty times greater in Birmingham than in Berlin. He thought those figures looked as if beer defended by a standard of purity was more wholesome than so-called scientific beer which contained almost any chemical one liked to name. They had the evidence of some great doctors that cirrhosis of the liver was caused by the drinking of beer in the manufacture of which sulphates had been used; and they well knew that sulphates of different natures were used very largely in the brewing of beer. A brewer who had written to him on this subject said that bisulphite of lime was used much more largely than any other preservative or hop substitute, and adds—

> "It is unnecessary to enter this preservative in the column in the Excise brewing book set apart for hop substitutes, and in my opinion, gained from experience, it is often used in sufficient quantities to be injurious to health."

He had many letters about this Bill, but he read this first because he understood the bulk of the opposition to the Bill was prompted by the brewers, and he thought any argument put forward by a brewer in favour of a standard of purity was of value. As to hop substitutes, evidence was given before the Brewing Materials Committee by Dr. Cornelius O'Sullivan, who was recognised as a great authority on brewing questions, and held a position as a chemist and brewer under Messrs. Bass, Radcliffe and Gretton. His testimony was to the effect that hop substitutes were used in the cheaper beers only—the beer for the most part drunk by the working-classes in the lower class of tied houses. It was on behalf of the working-classes who liked their glass of beer that he brought this Bill forward. It was not a protective Bill, but a measure of social reform, which he brought forward on behalf of the beer-drinking public, and he took it that they had a right to be considered in the matter. He had a scale submitted to the Country Brewers' Society by Dr. Moritz as to the average proportions of ingredients used in the brewing of English beers. The quantity of English malt was stated at from 66 to 50 per cent., foreign malt, 34 to 25 per cent., and sugar, invert or glucose, 0 to 25 per cent. The quantity of sugar he had allowed in this Bill was rather greater than the mean, but he did not say that that was necessarily the standard that should be laid down, and if there was a strong feeling that the proportion was too much or too little, the question was a small one which might easily be adjusted in Committee. He would deal for a few moments with some objections which he heard were likely to be raised to the Bill. There was the objection of the brewers. He understood that the Brewers' Society had issued a circular—they had not sent him one—calling on Members of the House to reject this Bill—

> "Which imposes upon the scientific development of British brewing industries arbitrary restrictions, and in no way provides safeguards for the public health or secures for consumers a guarantee as to the purity of the materials employed."

As to the scientific development of British brewing, he was told that a very pleasant-tasting beer could be obtained from these materials:—gelatinised maize, quassia, dextro-lævulose, isinglass, antacidine, salicylic acid, viscosoline, and gypsum. Did they think the working-man, coming from his work and going into a public-house for a pint of beer, wanted to drink that sort of stuff? He did not know what some of the substances were, but some he did know, and those he certainly did not want to drink. This Bill would not prevent people from drinking beer made from chemicals if they wanted to, but it would give them a guarantee that they should not, if they did not want to, drink a beer made of such materials as he had specified. In May last year there was given by the Chancellor of the Exchequer to his predecessor in the representation of the Rye Division a rather interesting answer in relation to materials used by English brewers. It was a long list of unpronounceable words, which, whatever their meaning, sounded most unwholesome. He would not say whether the British workman would declare that these beers were wholesome or not; but what he insisted upon was that when the British workman wanted to drink barley beer he ought to have the right to obtain it. A French king, when pressed to invade this country long ago, said that the Englishmen were fed on such good beef and beer that it would be an impossible task to invade Great Britain. These were the days when beer was pure by statute; and why should we do away with the conditions which produced such an impression on the mind of a great French potentate? Surely it was the desire of the disciples, not only of the blue-water school, but of the linked battalion system, that there should be continued the means of producing by the roast beef of Old England and its historic beer the men for the first and also for the second line of defence of England? He expected that every Member of the House had been lately attending smoking concerts. [MINISTERIAL ironical cheers.] Did not hon. Gentlemen opposite attend smoking concerts in their constituencies? [MINISTERIAL ironical cries of "No!"] Well, he had taken part in many such smoking concerts in his and other constituencies, and there was often a song at these concerts, which ran:—"I likes a glass of good beer, I does"—and going on through many verses in a similar jovial strain. Well, these men should be allowed to have it! They ought not to have forced upon them one of those concoctions which had been described to the House. If these men wanted and asked for a glass of barley beer, why should they not receive it? This question of the purity of beer was one which the great brewers of the country could not oppose. The product of the large majority of these brewers would come well within the definitions of the Bill. It was only the small brewers, who depended largely on the protection of the low-class tied houses, who would be affected by this Bill. He did not think that the protection of the tied houses ought to have the sympathy of a free trade House like the present. A great deal had been said that if they attempted, as it was alleged was done under the provisions of the Bill, to interfere with the development of scientific brewing and the use of chemicals, the English beer would become heavier and stronger. The whole question was the difference between the barley beer and the chemical beer. The barley beer was a working-man's food as well as a drink; chemical beer was not. He maintained that beer should contain the properties of food as well as those of drink, and that it did so until scientific brewing came in. He admitted that it might possibly be more desirable that there should be no demand for beer at all, but the depravity of human nature was so great that we liked to drink beer, and so we must look at this question not from the point of view of whether beer or water was preferable, but on the assumption that beer would be drunk in any case, and that a standard of purity should therefore be fixed for the sake of those who wished to know what they were drinking. Another question which would be raised was that of the public taste. It was said that the public taste was changing from heavy beers to light ones which were brewed from these chemicals. He did not know why that claim should be made. The largest of our brewing firms brewed without using chemicals at all. Guinness, the largest brewers in the United Kingdom, did so. And how was it that the demand for their beers continued to be so great in the country? How was it that Bass & Co. brewed beer which came well within the standard laid down in this Bill, and yet had a continued large demand for their old pure beers? It was perfectly absurd to say that the taste of the country for beer depended on brewing with scientific chemicals. It was perfectly absurd to contend that the taste of the country demanded these light chemical beers rather than sound, wholesome barley beer. The return of the brewing materials used, issued last week, showed that 52,000,000 bushels of barley malt were used last year; and that all the other substances, including saccharine, had amounted to only 14,000,000 odd bushels in terms of barley malt. The average use of barley malt was therefore something like 78 per cent. When the House admitted, as they must, that a certain type of inferior beer was supplied by the tied houses which had better not be supplied, the effect of that 78 per cent. would be increased and would come to nearly, if not quite, the 85 per cent. provided for in the Bill. Another point which might be raised, though he did not think it would, was that the employment of barley malt might involve the risk of arsenical poisoning; but it had been clearly shown by the Commission that all risk in that direction was easily avoidable, and he did not think it need be seriously considered. Nor would he use this argument against the use of sugar. One other objection was going to be raised—at least he was told so, and it astounded him. It was that the Bill was a protective measure. If the Bill laid it down that barley beer must be brewed from English hops and English barley, he granted it might be called protective; but it did not, and while the foreigner had a right to send his hops and his barley into our markets how could the Bill be called a protective measure? The only thing that might be protected was the interior economy of the British working-man, and surely that was a form of protection which even a free trade Parliament would recognise as desirable. It had been said, too, that this Bill was but the thin end of the wedge. It was not so; it was the whole wedge. For if this Bill were passed it would give all they asked for—the righ of every man to obtain, on asking for it, beer of a certain standard of purity. He maintained that this was a Bill of social reform in the cause of temperance and health, and as such should have the support of the great Liberal Party, which had come to this House pledged to social reform. It should have the support of the Labour Members, who were always eager to do anything which was in the interests of the British working-man, and it should have the support of the Irish Nationalists who had told the House and country that they were always willing to support anything in the way of progress and for the welfare of their fellow-creatures. He asked the House to pass the Second Reading of the Bill and thanked them for the courtesy, kindness and consideration with which they had listened to his speech. He begged to move that this Bill be now read a second time.

*MR. BARNARD (Kidderminster) said that he rose to second the Motion for the Second Reading of the Bill because it appeared to him that it was only fair and right that the customer should be supplied with what he asked for and that he should know what he was buying. It was the "tied house" system of this country which in a large degree prevented the purchaser from having his choice. He thought the Bill was in the interest of the country generally. The House should remember that there was at present no recognised standard as to what beer was. We had had a definition of whiskey and of margarine and butter, but as to beer, there was no definition of what it was or any effective supervision of what was to be put into it. To all intents and purposes in regard to what was known as the "free mash-tun," the only supervision exercised was that of the Revenue officials. It appeared to him that there were many reasons why there should be some searching examination of what was used in the manufacture of beer. Malt was distinctly nutritious, but in the case of other articles to which allusion had been made, it was clear that they did not contain the nutritive qualities of the article to which he had alluded. Hon. Members seemed to think that the health of the people was not affected by the quality of the beer they drank, but it was a matter of experience that persons drinking bee made from malt and hops did not suffer in health to the degree that people who drank beer made from other materials did. Exception might perhaps be taken to two of the clauses of the Bill. The first was the one which provided that 85 per cent. should be malt and hops, and 15 per cent. other ingredients. The mover had stated that that was not a hard and fast rule, but was open to alteration. The other clause provided that if any person sold beer of this adulterated description in a licensed house, he should be liable to lose his licence. He was quite aware that some hon. Members thought that a drastic clause, but it appeared to him essential that there should be such a clause if an Act of Parliament of this kind was to be operative. The evidence showed that in regard to the presence of arsenic in beer the brewers had overcome that difficulty. When, however, he turned to raw grain, the quantity of rice and the huge amount of sugar, a different question was opened up. In the Army contracts for India one of the conditions laid down by the War Office was that the beer should be brewed from malt and hops alone, and he assumed that the Indian Government, in laying down that principle, had strong reasons in favour of the argument he was endeavouring to address to the House. Another point was the nutrition contained in malt. It was well known that the principal articles of baby food made by chemists had as the foundation of their strength the basis of malt. Who were the people who objected to this Bill? The brewers, who declared that if this alteration in the law was made, it would not help the English farmers, because they should not use so much English barley, as barley from other countries came in free. The only article which paid duty in this connection was sugar, and he should be glad to see the duty on that lessened. Then there was a point which he wanted hon. Members who held extreme temperance views to bear in mind. If they studied statistics of the towns of England, they would find that more charges of drunkenness arose in connection with tied houses towns than in connection with free-houses. Taking the town which he represented, there were a number of small brewers who did not use sugar at all, and it was a remarkable fact that the return of drunkenness in that place was as low as in any other town of its size in the United Kingdom. The brewers said that they ought to be allowed their "free mash tun." On their side they said that a man ought to be able to sell what he chose and yet they said it was impossible for the tenant of a tied house in these days to buy what he chose. The brewer argued that the public taste required what they sent out, but he ventured to urge that they had educated the public taste in the direction which suited their commercial arrangements. He did not want to use any cross words in regard to the arrangements between the tied house tenant and the brewer, but he thought he should not be saying anything offensive if he said that they were "tainted with slavery." Guinness', the largest brewers in the world, did not use any sugar at all, nor did Bass', with their enormous trade, except for priming. He wanted to show what had been the effect of the imposition of the war tax in regard to the use of malt. He found that there was a decrease of 7,000,000 bushels of malt after the war, with no decrease in substitutes. Though these worthy gentlemen paid about £1,500,000 for the extra shilling on the barrel, if the report was correct, they sent out so many more barrels of water that they largely reduced that loss. He thought it was quite right to allude to the report which had been sent out by the Treasury. What did it prove? In Ireland, with the enormous brewery of Guinness', they used 6,000,000 bushels of malt and very little sugar. How was that affected by the Bill? There were rather more than 5,000 brewers in the country, and of those 3,500 used hardly any, or a very small quantity, of sugar or substitutes at all. Therefore, the only persons influenced were the 1,730 who were left. He would remind the House that all those people in the country who brewed and sold their own beer were practically a long way within the scope of this measure which he was seconding, and it was only the 1,730 who would be affected. If they took the first four breweries in the country, what did they find? Bass' used none at all for brewing and they were doing remarkably well. Guinness' were doing remarkably well. The next brewery they came to was not doing well, and it was known that they were using 21 per cent. of these substitutes, and the next was using 14 per cent. and doing remarkably well. The Bill asked for an expression of opinion that it was desirable in the interest of the public that so long as the monopoly of the licensing trade continued in this country it should be an obligation on the part of the licensee to sell barley beer to such of his customers who asked him for it. It was in that spirit, and in that spirit alone, that he seconded the Second Reading of this Bill.

Motion made and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Courthope.*)

*SIR EDWARD SASSOON (Hythe) moved that the Bill be read a second time this day six months. He congratulated the hon. Member for the Rye Division of Sussex on the courage and intrepidity with which he had moved the Second Reading of a Bill of so crude, fantastic, and unworkable a nature. A Bill of a similar character was brought in in 1902 and those who dissented from its proposals and provisions were easily able to give that Bill a decent burial. But the measure had been exhumed, and he asked the House again to decently inter it. In other days Mr. Quilter and Mr. Chaplin, in season and out of season, took up the cudgels in this matter and became the champions, guardians, and protagonists of Bills such as this, in the altogether mistaken belief that it was going to redound to the benefit of English agriculture; but though those Gentlemen were no longer in the House they had standard-bearers left in historic succession. He had been reminded that this Bill contained no new principle. That was so. In various garbs this principle had come before successive Governments in different Parliaments and had failed to receive the sanction of the House. The provisions of this Bill, with its restrictions, prescriptions, and penal provisions, reminded him of the sumptuary laws of bye-gone days. He was painfully aware of his own shortcomings in dealing with the technical questions with which this subject bristled, but he brought to the consideration of the broad issue contained in the Bill a mind wholly unembarrassed by past or present interest in the agricultural or brewing industries. The Bill had been advocated in the name of temperance, and it seemed to him a strange way to advocate temperance to ask men to brew and drink a heavier and stronger beer. Before lager beer was introduced it was noticed that beer was rather strong in alcohol, that it was narcotised by hops. An opinion was largely prevalent amongst people of the medical profession that intoxication partook much more of the nature of narcotic poisoning than the not altogether unwholesome alcoholic stimulation. They had been told by the hon. Member of the wonderful effect that would be produced upon the physique of our people if the Bill became law; that their strength would be so increased that we should be able to reduce our Army by several battalions. If that were true everybody in the House would be tumbling over one another to record their votes in favour of the Bill. The hon. Member had recited the noxious things that brewers put into their beer, and the demoralising effects they had upon the people. One of the ingredients, he understood, was quassia. Well, he believed that to be a most useful ingredient; in fact, he took a good deal of it himself when not feeling up to the mark. Then there was isinglass, which was largely used in cooking, and gypsum, which was only phosphate of lime, an equally desirable ingredient. If the hon. mover and seconder of this Bill would show that the existing conditions were such that they were detrimental and prejudicial to the people of this country, and that the passing of this Bill would be for the benefit of the consumer, and would conduce also to the prosperity of the agricultural interests, he would be one of the first to vote in its favour, but from the industrial, scientific, hygienic and economic point of view — from any standpoint he thought it could be proved that that was not the fact. The hon. Member who seconded the Resolution had fallen foul of the tied house system. He held no brief for the tied houses, but if he wanted to get rid of the principle of the tied house, this was certainly not the occasion to do it. He reminded the hon. Member for Rye that substitutes for sugar were not used for the purpose of economy, and that there was absolutely no difference between sugar derived from malt and that derived from other substitutes; they were chemically and scientifically identical. There was much more danger of hops and barley being contaminated than of the contamination of sugar or other saccharine substances. It was a matter of common knowledge and notoriety that one of the essentials of good beer depended upon what was called nitrogenous or albuminous properties which were derived from the malt and the starchy portion derived from the saccharine matter which, under this Bill, it was proposed to limit to 15 per cent. The promoters of this Bill said that, if the proportion of 15 per cent. was allowed, the beer would be good, but where there was more it was bad. Where was the magic of the figure of 15 per cent.; was it not setting up a standard arbitrary and empirical for which no justification or scientific formulæ could be adduced. The question was were these substitutes deleterious or not; if they were deleterious 15 per cent. should not be allowed; not one fiftieth should be used. In his opinion it was a rank injustice that a perfectly honourable class of manufacturers in this country should have their business interfered with and be constantly harassed at the bidding of mere chimerical ideas. Were these substitutes really injurious? In the opinion of the Committee, which reported in 1899, appointed to consider the whole question of brewing materials, they were not. The Majority Report of that Committee stated that if substitutes were not used foreign barley would have to be used in a far larger proportion, and British barley in such small amounts in competition with the foreign barley as practically to exclude much British barley; so that, so far from this being a protective Bill, it would lead to the absolute diminution of barley growing in this country. The Report of that Committee also showed, as regard the prejudicial effect of the sugar and the use of other substitutes, in the view of the experts examined there was no truth whatever in such a description; that the products of science had gradually been utilised so as to blend skilfully with the products of nature, and to produce the sort of light beverage which the consumer demanded. Sugar was not put into the mash-tun for the purpose of economy, but to get those light kinds of beer for which a taste had grown, and which he hoped the House would do nothing to discourage. The hon. Gentleman who seconded the Second Reading laid great stress on the fact that people should be allowed to have the sort of beer they wanted; he saw no difficulty about that. If there was a large demand for a particular beer the trade would see that that beer was supplied. The hon. Member said that Bass and Guinness did not use saccharine substitutes. Why not? Because there was a demand for a heavier beer and stout both at home and abroad. If the brewers saw a general demand for a heavy beer they would very soon produce it. Then he came to the penal provisions of the Bill. It provided that when a brewer or his assistant or servant failed to give the customer a particular beer which he demanded he was to be mulcted in a fine varying from £50 to £250. That was a most unjust provision. There was no appeal from summary conviction, nor was there any appeal from Clause 2 which laid down that if any brewer knowingly sold or offered for sale as barley beer any beer brewed or prepared in contravention of that section, he should be subject to a fine varying from £100 to £500. Upon what evidence were they going to sacrifice this victim to the principle of pure beer, and by what machinery were the penalties to be enforced and pressed home? He noticed with pleasure that this point had also been gone into by the Departmental Committee, who declared that they were satisfied that with the present state of scientific knowledge it was not possible to obtain sufficient accuracy on analysis to ensure a conviction. He thought they would hesitate to act on evidence of that description. He had had the advantage of consulting on this matter in his own county a brewer who was also a maltster, and who therefore was in a position to take a comprehensive and impartial view of the provisions of, and the reasons for, this Bill, and this brewer had assured him that if the Bill became law it would sound the death knell of British barley, while failing to do any good to the country. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had had several demands made upon him to improve the condition of the working classes—demands which were perfectly justified in some instances—but if they were going to add to the demands this Bill, which would diminish the consumption of sugar, and consequently lead to a decrease in the Exchquer returns, he thought that the post of Chancellor of the Exchequer would not be a bed of roses; and that the financial chess board of this country would assume a position of the utmost gravity. There was no public demand for this measure, no evidence having been adduced that any important section of the community wanted it. He was convinced that it was an unwarrantable interference with the normal, natural, and scientific development of a huge industry, while it left the foreign manufacturer of beer perfectly free. Because he was convinced that the Bill would have a most injurious and deleterious effect upon all the interests concerned, as well as upon a great industry which contributed very largely to the British Exchequer, while it carried on its operations under the ægis, the sanction, and the supervision of a Government Department, he asked the House to read the Bill this day six months.

Mr. PAUL (Northampton) said he seconded the Amendment of the hon. Baronet for the rejection of this ridiculous Bill. He need hardly say that he did not apply that epithet to the speech of the hon. Member for the Rye Division of Sussex to which all listened with pleasure. He could assure the hon. Gentleman he would not use the argument generally known as the thin end of the wedge, because he did not know what it had to do with the Bill, and he was equally unable to understand what this Bill had to do with the question of tied houses. If the hon. Gentleman would bring in a Bill for dealing with the relations between brewers and tied houses, he would promise to give it most attentive and favourable consideration. The hon. Gentleman thought that the adoption of the Bill would render less likely the invasion of this country by a foreign power. That was an argument which would be better brought forward and developed when naval armaments were under discussion in Committee of Supply. What was it that this Bill really did? The hon. Member for Kidderminster was good enough to say that the opposition to this Bill came entirely from the brewers. He would very much like to know where his (Mr. Paul's) brewery was. His only connection with brewers was that they worked very hard to keep him out of Parliament, and if he should ever come forward as the champion of any trade, the brewing trade would be the last he should select. Nevertheless brewers were entitled to common justice and such measure of common-sense in legislation as the House was able to apply. This Bill divided all who dealt in liquor into three criminal categories. He did not think there was a clause in the Bill which did not contain a penalty. The first category consisted of those brewers to whom everyone might apply for barley beer. He had never heard anyone ask for barley beer, although he had heard invalids ask for barley water, and he might say, in passing, that he thought a pure water Bill would be infinitely more advantageous than this measure. If a brewer sold beer not made of barley, but made in a modern scientific manner, he would be liable for a third offence to a penalty of £500. What was the second class of penalty? If anyone went into a public-house and asked for barley beer, and the publican said, "Go somewhere else, I don't keep it," the publican would be liable to a penalty of £250. Again, if a brewer indulged in free trade and got his malt, hops, sugar, etc., where he could, and some of it came from abroad, and he did not label every cask, bottle, and tap, he would be a criminal of another type, and would be liable to a penalty of £100. Was the Bill really brought before the House in a serious spirit? Pure beer Bill! It was a pure protection Bill. He should have thought from the point of view of the promoters of this Bill the failure to give protection against foreign barley was a fault and not a merit. The fact was that the natural man was a protectionist. The great French economist Bastiat had summed up the whole question. The umbrella maker, he said, was in favour of protection for umbrellas, and free trade in wood, silk, and whalebone. He had no doubt th hon. Member for the Rye Division of Sussex was in favour of protection for hops, and free trade for hop-poles. Everyone was really a natural monopolist. He had sometimes wondered why in these days people were allowed to write books, because if they were not they would have to buy his, and although it might be very bad for them it would be very good for him. He was astounded to see on the back of this protectionist Bill the name of the hon. Member for East Norfolk, who the other night supported the Motion of his hon. friend the Member for the Colne Valley. "Frailty, thy name is woman!" But the frailest of the sex was a model of virtue compared with the practical politician who picked up his principles as he went along. Another name on the back of the Bill was that of the hon. and gallant Member for the Newport Division of Shropshire, whose name had caused one of the fiercest turmoils that ever exercised ecclesiastical circles in this country. Let him not bring beer into the category of religion. This Bill was against science —not the science that dwelt in the clouds and the stars, but the practical side—science applied, as it was intended, for the benefit and use of man. Brewers understood brewing better than the Members of the House of Commons, and they had learned from men of science to make substitutes which were pleasant and wholesome. The supporters of this Bill spoke as if malt and hops were the only proper ingredients of beer. Why should these scientific methods not be used? If the beer made from these substitutes was nasty, people would not drink it, and if it was unwholesome they would soon find it out. They were not distinguishable either by the taste, by subsequent effects, or by chemical analysis from malt and hops, or barley, for which they were used as substitutes, and they were perfectly and absolutely harmless. The beer produced by these substitutes was not altogether like the old beer. People who drank the good old-fashioned English ale told him that unless they were exceedingly careful it sent them to sleep. And what was the soporific part of it? Why, hops, and the beer scientifically brewed, though the hon. Member for Cockermouth might think it was not much better than any other, was lighter, more wholesome, and contained far less alcohol, and they would find this was so if they subjected it to any experimental methods they pleased. The hon. Member who was more familiar with alcohol and its effects than any other hon. Member of this House would recollect the case of the farmer who rode up to the door of a public-house and said, "I want to try your beer; bring me a quart," and after drinking a second quart he said, "Your beer is good, I think I will get down and have some." That was the experimental method in a very simple form; and it was used in the course of the general election in regard to the equal loaves of Birmingham. A baker told him that they might have two loaves the same size and the same price, one made from taxed dear corn and the other from untaxed free corn, but they would not be of the same weight because there would be more dough and flour in the one than the other. Loaves, like opinions, had to be weighed as well as counted. Those were simple rudimentary instances, but beer made by modern scientific methods could be subjected to the most rigid chemical analysis and nothing deleterious would be discovered, and why should people, who preferred this beer to the heavier, more alcoholic, and more narcotic beverages that would be produced under this Bill, not be allowed to have it, and why should the brewer be prevented from selling it? This was a Bill against free trade, against science, and against temperance, because these modern light beers really contained very little, if any, more alcohol than the ginger beer and lemonade to which even the hon. Baronet the Member for Cockermouth had no rooted objection The Bill was the last flicker of the great flame of Protection which was lighted three years ago by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham. It blazed into its full noontide splendour in 1903. It received a large dash of cold water at the general election, and he believed that in this contemptible measure, the rejection of which he had the honour of seconding, they had its last faint flickering beam.

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out the word 'now,' and at the end of the Question to add the words 'upon this day six months.'"—(*Sir Edward Sassoon.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

*MR. EDMUND LAMB (Herefordshire, Leominster) said that this was in no sense a Party Bill. The Second Reading was proposed and the rejection of the measure was moved from opposite Benches. He spoke in support of it as a free trader, but it had been opposed as a protective measure by a free trade Member. If it had not been brought in by the hon. Member for the Rye Division it would have been assuredly brought in by some one else probably on the Ministerial side of the House. There had been in past years a persistent demand for such a measure, and the promoters thought that there was perhaps a chance of the Bill being carried in this House, because certain vested interests were not as strong in Parliament to-day as they had formerly been. There was a demand for this Bill because, whether it was wine or water or whisky or brandy, the plain man wanted to know what he was getting for his money. The argument that there was this demand was admitted because the hon. Member for Northampton said that this was a Bill against scientific methods. It might be pointed out that this was not a compulsory Bill, and if the scientific beer of which the hon. Member approved was going to be ousted by the plain compound of malt and hops, it was because the consumer would prefer the one to the other. The brewer would still have the opportunity of brewing as he pleased. He wished again to emphasise this other point. In his opinion there would be no necessity for this Bill if it was not for the tied house system. He did not think the hon. Member for Northampton understood the tied house system in the country, especially where there was only one house. The tenant had to sell any stuff that was supplied to him by the brewer, and he had to sell as much of it as he possibly could. The brewer was allowed to supply any liquid having more than 2 per cent. of alcohol, and the House knew that certain temperance drinks could be sold as beer under the present regulations. He certainly thought that when the time came when they could get "one man, one licence," and when there was some competition, there would be no need for such a Bill as this. He was sorry that those who had drafted this Bill had abandoned the Johnsonian definition of beer—

"Beer," said Dr. Johnson, "is a liquor made from malt and hops; it is distinguished from ale in being either smaller or older."

Now if this Bill were passed into law, and if a man asked for "beer," he might be given a strong teetotal ginger ale; but if he asked for "barley beer," he would be assured that that beer would not be made from maize or rice, or other grain than barley, and would not contain quassia, strychnine, gentia, salicylic, or Gambia cutch. They might well ask, with Calverley, of those people who drank the stuff that was sold in tied houses in the slums, "Have they digestions, and an actual body, such as dyspepsia might make attacks on?" The hon. Baronet the Member for Hythe had said that quassia was a good thing for some people; but they were not all in a condition to need it, and he did not think it was necessary to make it an ingredient of beer. The hon. Member for Northampton had spoken as if this were to be a compulsory Act; but the question he would put was, To whom would the Bill, if it became an Act, do any injustice at all? They knew that many brewers used only malt and hops in making their beer, and that many firms would like to have such a measure as this passed into law, because it would not only secure to the consumer the freedom of choice which he had not at present, but to some extent would enfranchise the tenant of the tied house. Some people seemed to imagine that this measure smacked of protection. He was convinced that it went the other way. In regard to hops he would say at once that personally he would resist to the utmost of his power protection for English hops. No doubt some hop-growers thought it would benefit their industry, but he did not forget that this was a free-trade country, and foreign hops could always compete with

English hops. In regard to barley it was argued in 1902 by the then Member for Launceston, now Lord Justice Moulton, that "the use of substitutes came to the rescue of British barley," otherwise the brewers would have to go to foreign barleys, because the English barleys were so heavy in the albuminous portions of the grain as compared with the starch —and successful brewing depended in maintaining a balance and due proportion between nitrogenous portions of malt, which gave the flavour, and the starchy portions which gave the alcohol. It was claimed that this system "saved us from German beer" coming in, and therefore that that was an argument against the Bill. He contended that the argument was frank protection. Why not use foreign barley if it was the best thing to use for the manufacture of beer? It would be exchanged for some product of British labour, or for some service done. They did not wish to exclude foreign barley or German beer. All they asked was that it should be marked "Imported," and for this reason. In Bavaria for 400 years it had been forbidden to sell beer not made from malted barley, hops, water, and yeast; but they were allowed to use substitutes in the manufacture of beer for foreign export. All that was wanted to be known was, for the sake of the consumer, that foreign substitutes for malted barley had been used in the manufacture of the beer. Hon. Gentlemen opposite were fond of talking of the prosperity of Germany; be would put it to them—was it perhaps due, not to Tariff Reform but to the purity of the national beverage? The last argument against the Bill was that it was a measure directed against the poor brewer. That argument did not carry much weight with him, or in fact appeal to him at all. It was not the monopolist to whom he wanted to show consideration, nor was it the producer who needed protection. It was the consumer who required both consideration and protection and to whom freedom of choice should be secured; and it was because this was a moderate measure and made for freedom, that he asked the House to allow the Bill to be read a second time.

MR. REES (Montgomery Boroughs) said that so far as this Bill was a protective measure against John Barleycorn, his constituents would have no interest in it. What they did take a great interest in was the cause of temperance, and he had been quite unable to gather from the speeches made in favour of the Bill that it would promote that cause. He was glad of the opportunity of asking subsequent speakers in support of the Bill to make that point quite clear. It would be no justification for passing this Bill to say that it was only a little one; if it did not promote the cause of temperance it would only add to that maze of laws and regulations regarding the sale of liquor which was the difficulty of our time. He had heard the Bill argued for in the interests of the brewers, but not in the interests of temperance. He confessed that during his election contests he had found it necessary at one time to drink a glass of beer. He hoped that was not a very compromising admission for a candidate interested in temperance reform to make. But the result of drinking that one glass of beer was to arouse in him a raging thirst which might have induced thseo inclined that way to take many more glasses in order to assuage it. It did seem of great importance to consider whether this result of drinking a glass of beer came from the use of the materials with long Latin names which had been rolled off by hon. Members learned in chemistry. He hoped that that aspect of the question would be dealt with more fully at a subsequent stage of the debate. He had heard of a widow lady who had a son, and who, when informed that that son was in the habit of drinking deeply at night, indignantly denied it, because, as she said, he was always so thirsty in the morning that he could not have drunk much the night before. He remembered that it used to be said in days gone by that the English officials in India drank twelve bottles of beer every day with impunity; and that seemed to show that the materials of which the beer was composed could not have been very injurious, However, his only interest in the Bill was whether it was likely to promote the cause of temperance, and he hoped that that would be cleared up before the vote was taken.

*Mr. WILLIAM RUTHERFORD (Liverpool, West Derby) said it appeared to him that the whole merit of this Bill was in its title. The very word "Pure" had a fascinating and seductive sound, and he could well understand that county councils and other highly educated authorities had sent in petitions to their Members to support the Second Reading of the Bill. In fact, the Bill had been taken up by many people under the impression that if they could only succeed in inducing their Members to support it, they would be doing something in the interests of purity. The very expression "pure beer" was enough to make the ordinary man's mouth water when he recalled the stuff he had been compelled at times to swallow, and was of itself well-nigh sufficient to incline one to support it. The hon. Member for Rye objected to tied houses; but he could not for the life of him see what that subject had to do with the question of the purity of the brew. It was a very great pity that one subject should be mixed up with the other. Most of the ingredients whose long Latin names had been complained of were to be found in the sugar and water necessary for brewing the very best beers. First, there was the word gypsum. He always understood the great merit of the water at Burton was that it contained a slight trace of gypsum. Then it was said that the light beers contained magnesium phosphates; but these were found in the best barley malt. Isinglass was also mentioned. There was not a soup hon. Members would get in a London restaurant which did not contain isinglass. They would not ask for isinglass, but they would get it all the same. In the case of bisulphate of lime, he understood that that was used only in the case of beer made from pure malt and hops when the water was deficient in that particular ingredient and when the beer was required to be exported in bottle. These things only illustrated the immense difficulties in the way of the House of Commons passing a Bill which would make it illegal to use those articles which were commonly found in the manufacture of the best beer. The hon. Gentleman said that malt was an exceedingly nutritious substance, and that other sugars did not contain the same nutritious qualities; but the sugar derived from maize and sugar-cane was as pure as that derived from malted barley. It was therefore an entire misdescription to brand as impure beer that which was made from maize, sugar and sugar cane, instead of from malted barley. He had listened with amazement to a statement made by the hon. Member for Kidderminster with respect to Liverpool. The hon. Member said that according to some return there was only one small brewer in Liverpool who brewed his own beer.

Mr. BARNARD: I was reading from a Return published last week in the directory headed "Brewers' licences."

*Mr. WILLIAM RUTHERFORD said he entirely disputed the accuracy of the statement. If the return stated that there was only one brewer in Liverpool brewing his own beer it was utter nonsense. During the last ten or twelve years the taste of the people had gone entirely in the direction of a lighter, less alcoholic, and more innocuous fluid than the heavy liquor of days gone by. Such light beer could be brewed only from English barley malt, when a proportion of brewer's sugar, made from maize or sugar cane, was also added. An effect of passing the Bill would be either to cause foreign barley to be used instead of English barley, or to diminish the production of very little beers, which the people now wanted. He contended that the change was all in the cause of temperance and sobriety, and had arisen from the improved education and higher standard of the people. That was what most hon. Members who took an interest in the sobriety of the people would desire to bring about. He believed that this taste was part of the progress and improvement of the people in which they had been rejoicing for so many years past. It proceeded from higher education and from the increased standard of comfort of the people, and he believed that if they passed this Bill to-day they would strike a blow at that improvement, because it would drive the people back to those heavy and most objectionable beers which our ancestors used to drink, and from which some people were suffering to-day. Directly they used the word "pure" a definition was necessary as to what "pure" was. If people were compelled to drink pure water how many would drink it at all? Pure water was the most insipid and objectionable fluid that one ever tasted; in the first place you could not get pure water unless it was distilled. There was such a thing as pure whisky, as they had heard from recent litigation, and there was no doubt that legislation was greatly wanted to ensure purity in many of the necessaries of life, but this was not the way to bring about legislation of that character. To pass an Act of Parliament which would have the effect of fixing an arbitrary percentage of malt as the amount to be put into beer would, in his opinion, be a retrograde step instead of a step in advance. This was a most extraordinary Bill. They could see at once how the publican could evade it if he thought fit. He might keep some thick, cloudy, unpalatable fluid which would exactly comply with the provisions of the Bill, and when a customer asked him for barley beer he could place some of this stuff before him, and immediately the customer saw it he would naturally say, "Take it away and give me something different." That was one way of evading the provisions of the Bill. Or the brewer might simply provide himself with some bottles of Bass's beer, and when asked for barley beer he might say, "Well, there you are, there is a bottle of Bass, which is barley beer," and for that he could charge what he liked, and he would charge probably so high a price that the customer would refuse it. These were merely illustrations to show how stupid all these penalty Bills were, and that though they could be evaded they could not be enforced. He thought the Bill if passed would be an intolerable absurdity and would interfere unwarrantably with a great industry, and that, in the cause of the light non-alcoholic beers, in the cause of temperance, in the cause of the English farmers, and in order that the people might avoid having to drink the heavy soporific beers of the past, he hoped the House would abstain from reading this Bill a second time.

MR. ROBERT PRICE (Norfolk, E.) said he had always argued that there was a distinct and a large public which desired to drink a pure barley malt beer such as was proposed by this Bill, and he had never been able to see any reason why they should not be able to have it. This Bill did not prevent people brewing in the most scientific way, and he could not agree with Lord Justice Moulton, who in 1902 said that if this Bill was passed great obstacles would be placed in the way of scientific brewing. He had not the least doubt that there had been very important chemical discoveries of great utility in connection with beer making, which had no doubt enabled the brewers to get large extracts from the constituents they used, and had enabled them to put a palatable article upon the market at a fair price. When Lord Justice Moulton tried to persuade the House in 1902 that the beer sold then was better than it used to be he did not succeed in persuading him. He knew that beer, and he would like to take Lord Justice Moulton into some of the districts of Norfolk which he represented and show him the dark, cloudy, sticky, disagreeable fluid served out to the agricultural labourers as a result of the development of the great science of brewing. He had been much struck on that occasion by Lord Justice Moulton's description of the way in which fermentation was kept going until the last moment in order that there might be the sparkle in the beer which was so much desired. It sounded perfectly delicious, but in Norfolk the fermentation went on after that, as some knew to their cost. He had been told by one landlady in Norfolk that the beer never got clear until the barrel was nearly empty. So far as he could see, the scientific process as applied to the beer sold in the country districts resulted in thoroughly bad beer being sold, though it was not for him to say that beer brewed under the system suggested in the Bill was going to be better. He quite agreed with the hon. Member opposite that it was easy to evade the provisions of the Bill, but at the same time he had always been accustomed to look upon the brewers as honourable men, and he believed that if they undertook to brew, in addition to this extremely scientific beer, a beer such as was suggested by this Bill, they would do so to the best of their ability. The publicans would be glad to sell it because they would be asked for it, and the more they could sell the better the publican would be pleased. The machinery of the Bill was a matter for consideration in Committee and not on Second Reading. He did not intend to follow the hon. Gentleman in his criticisms of details. As a matter of fact, he did not know that tied houses had anything to do with the Bill. He should not have thought they had, but when it was said that they had nothing to do with the sale of bad beer that was a question on which he joined issue, because he was certain that the filthy and bad stuff sold to the working classes of this country was the direct result of the tied house system. Complaint had been made that the short title did not properly describe the Bill, but the longer title pretty accurately described it. All it did was to make it necessary for every publican to keep pure barley, malt, and hop beer, which was the fluid which most people used to think they were buying when they asked for beer, until they had some enlightenment from debates in this House and outside as to how their beer was altered by the progress of science. Some of them had had an experience of this scientific process and would prefer, if they could get it, to have the home brewed beer such as was still to be found in some of our farms and old country houses. He believed the Bill was a great step towards temperance, as it would lead to the people drinking the light non-alcoholic beers like the German beers. The Bill was demanded by large numbers of people, and as it allowed full scope to scientific brewing he did not see how it could hurt the brewers. The only liability it threw upon them was that they should brew a certain amount of pure barley malt beer, and that the publican should keep such a stock as was required. The larger the stock the publican had to sell the better he and the brewer would be pleased, because it would show that there was a demand for it.

*MR. CHARLES ROBERTS (Lincoln) said he ventured to intervene for a few moments in this debate because the hon. Member who moved the Second Reading had made an appeal to the temperance reformers to support this measure. He belonged to a school of temperance reformers which was anxious for any step in advance, and which did not care whether a temperance measure came from a brewer or whether it came from a protectionist, provided it would carry temperance reform a little further. And if this Bill would do anything to redeem this parliamentary session from the reproach of barrenness from the point of view of temperance reform, he would be willing to support this Bill. But he was not persuaded that it was going to assist them from the point of view of temperance reform. The hon. Member had told the House that under this Bill we might arrive at the condition of Belgium and Bavaria, but inasmuch as those were two of the most drink-ridden countries in Europe, the prospect was not encouraging to advocates of temperance reform. The hon. Member who seconded the Bill suggested that it was a measure which would strike a blow at the tied house system. That again was a thing which he confessed would encourage him to support it, for one of the quarrels he had with the Party opposite—a quarrel which induced some of his friends to work harder against that Party in the general election than they had ever done in the past—was that the Licensing Act of 1904 struck from the hands of the licensing authorities those powers under which the licensing justices had some limited control of tied houses. If he thought that by supporting this Bill they could regain those powers, then he would vote for it. But he did not see that it did anything in that direction, and the hon. Member had not persuaded him that they were going to get much out of the Bill. It was supposed to be a Bill to provide for the purity of beer, and of course a pure liquor was what all desired, but he doubted whether it much mattered from a temperance standpoint whether an intoxicating liquor was made from malt or sugar. If the promoter of the Bill would schedule all the deleterious ingredients to which he had referred and bring them under that section of the Poisons Act, which would require liquors containing such ingredients to be labelled poison, he would get a good deal of support from temperance reformers. The real reason why no temperance reformer ought to be asked to support this Bill was given by the hon. Member who seconded the Second Reading. The hon. Member at the end of his speech told the House that the Bill imposed on every licensee an obligation to keep barley beer on his premises, and on demand supply it to any customer who asked for it. That decided his vote on this Bill. At present there was no obligation on the licensee to supply any particular liquor demanded by customers, or intoxicating liquor of any kind to the customers. That was the law. An inn-keeper was bound to supply food, non-alcoholic in character, and lodging, if he had it, to anyone who came and asked for it, but all licensees were not inn-keepers, and even inn-keepers were not bound to supply alcoholic liquor to those who asked for it. That was decided in 1887, and the words of the Judge who decided it in the case of Reg. *v.* Rymer were—

> "In such a place no one has a right to insist upon being served any more than in any other shops."

That being so, the promoters of the Bill had imposed for the first time in the history of our licensing laws such an obligation as far as barley beer was concerned, and he regarded the introduction of such a principle as a dangerous innovation. He therefore appealed to temperance reformers to oppose the Bill. At present there was no obligation on the licensee to supply drink, but, according to this Bill, if he refused to serve any customer who demanded to be served with barley beer he would be liable to a fine on a first offence of £50. He submitted that a provision like that would not operate in the direction of temperance, and was an innovation in the licensing law which could not be tolerated.

COLONEL KENYON-SLANEY (Shropshire, Newport) said the hon. Member who had just sat down seemed to be afraid that by the introduction of this Bill they would make it possible for the public to demand to be supplied with beer under circumstances when such a demand could not have been made before. All he could say was that, if the Bill was likely to have the effect suggested by the hon. Member, those who were promoting it would be glad to meet him in the matter and make such a thing impossible. There was not the slightest intention of taking away any of the safeguards of the man who now sold beer. All they desired to do was to ensure that there should be an alternative; that where there was a right to sell beer there should be a right on the customer's part to demand this particular beer. The hon. Gentleman might therefore be assured that there would be no such danger as he suggested. In answer to the objection of the hon. Member for the West Derby Division of Liverpool that the Bill would result in the public being offered what he was pleased to term a heavy, thick, and heady beer, he could only say that if this Bill could be reasonably supposed to work in any such direction he would alter his opinion and vote against it. But a little practical experience was worth a great deal of theory and assertion upon a matter of this kind. Being a practical man he, when the last Bill was defeated, took steps to find out what would be the result of beer brewed in accordance with the principles of this Bill. For nearly four years now he had been constantly supplied under contract by a brewer in his own county, the contract requiring that nothing whatever should enter into the making of the beer except barley, malt, and hops, and that the grain should be grown in Shropshire. If he had only done this a week or two ago for the purpose of making a point on this Bill the experience would have been worth nothing, but it had been going on for four years. This beer was brewed for his own consumption, and, in order to prove what could be done under a Bill of this sort, he had invited the opinion of many visitors on the merits and demerits of the liquor, with the result that he was prepared to say that it was extremely popular. It was light, clear, bright, the reverse of heady, and possessed of all the charms which the hon. Gentleman claimed for beer brewed in another way. In many cases his friends had ordered it for their own consumption. His experience, therefore, disproved the argument that the Bill would provide a concoction of heavy, sleepy, drunkenness-producing beer. He doubted whether any hon. Member had made the same experiment, and could speak with such weight. The Bill left the brewer absolutely free to brew beer exactly as he pleased, merely asking him to have some beer of this description on tap. In so far as the Bill promoted the making of pure beer, he claimed that it would tend in the direction of temperance, though to pretend that this beer would not make the person who took too much drunk was absurd. But there would be nothing in it which would induce a man to ask for another glass after having had one, and so far as that went he certainly thought they were advocating temperance. The arguments against the Bill were contradictory, because some condemned it as against free trade, and others as against the interest of the British barley-grower; the opponents must settle their little differences between themselves. The hon. Baronet who moved the rejection of the Bill had suggested that the promoters of the measure were on the horns of a dilemma, contending that either substitutes were deleterious and ought not to be allowed, or they were not deleterious and ought to be allowed. As a matter of fact, however, the law already dealt with margarine exactly as it was now suggested that it should deal with beer. Therefore, it was the hon. Baronet, and not the promoters of the Bill, who were on the horns of a dilemma, if they were to be consistent in food legislation. It would be an advantage if we could have a recognised standard of purity in all our main articles of consumption, and that anyone should be prosecuted who tampered with that standard. The case against the Bill was somewhat slender, and had rather broken down, because the House would gather that the charge that the beer would be heavier was contrary to scientific fact. That, therefore, could be disposed of at once. Then with regard to the consumer, the promoters of the Bill took their stand boldly on the belief that there was a large section of the general public which did desire, when they asked for beer, that they should have given to them a liquor brewed in accordance with the scheme laid down by the Bill. They desired to have this pure, light, unheady liquor if they could get it, and they could get it if beer was brewed on the lines laid down. Then it was said that it was possible for a licensee to evade the provisions of this Act by selling Bass; but he would not do so because Bass was brewed according to the provisions of the Bill. He confessed he was a little surprised to hear the hon. Member for Lincoln, who spoke on behalf of temperance, say that Belgium and Bavaria could not be quoted as countries in favour of our legislation, because the statistics proved that there was very little drunkenness in either country in relation to the population. He believed that the hon. Member, in making the reference, had mistaken the facts. He endorsed the remarks made by the hon. Member for East Norfolk as to the condition of the beer supplied in some places under the present circumstances, and he believed that if this Bill passed such a state of things would be rendered almost impossible; at any rate it would make it possible for the labourer not to have to drink such disgusting liquor as the hon. Member had described. It was said that agriculturists would be injured if the Bill were to come into operation. He allowed that there were two sides to that question. It was asserted on the one hand that the nature of English barley would not allow it to be largely used unless it were mixed with sugar, and that the brewers would have to go to other countries to obtain barley which they could use. The answer to that was that the largest buyers of English barley were people who were brewing well within the limits of the Bill. The great bulk of the chambers of agriculture supported the Bill. The number of brewers had greatly decreased in recent years. In 1853 there were 45,000 brewers; now there were 4,180. The result of this concentration of the trade in a comparatively few hands was that the brewers took such measures as would enable them to send out their beer in the shortest time after it had been brewed, and sought to avoid as far as possible the ordinary consequences of weather by the use of so-called science. He would be very unwilling, even for the advantage of agriculture, to identify himself with anything that might be harmful to the brewing trade; but he could not see that the interest of that trade would suffer under the Bill, because it proposed to set up a demand which it must be to the interest of the trade to supply. He therefore hoped that if the Bill passed, they would find in the result that it would be satisfactory to the consumer and not altogether unsatisfactory to the agricultural interest, and that brewing would still be found figuring as largely as ever among the trades of the country. His opinion was that the Bill would not entail any great or increased expenditure on the officers of the Inland Revenue, and if they were sufficiently safeguarded in that matter he could not help thinking that on the whole the House of Commons would accept the Bill for what it was intended to be, a moderate and useful measure which would help in securing pure beer.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. MCKENNA, Monmouthshire, N.) said that the principle raised by this Bill had never been treated as a Party question. A similar Bill introduced in 1901, though opposed by the then Chancellor of the Exchequer, was read a second time by a bare majority. The same Bill was introduced in 1902. It was again opposed by Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and rejected. In 1902 it was proposed that the provisions of the Bill should be enforced by the Inland Revenue officers, but Sir Michael Hicks-Beach then showed that it was impossible for that department to carry out the penalty provisions of the Bill. The promoters of the present Bill had left out all proposals for its enforcement, and the result would be that it would not be enforced at all. He submitted that it was unwise for the House to pass a Bill imposing a penalty for the enforcement of which it provided no means. How was it to be discovered whether or not a brewer sold barley beer when a purchaser asked for it? The Inland Revenue officers said that they could not enforce the Bill, and there were no means provided of determining whether a purchaser was defrauded or not. Then Clause 3 provided that every customer should have the right in a licensed house to demand barley beer and should be supplied with it on demand. That was a compulsory clause. The licensed victualler had now not only the right to sell beer, but also the right to refuse to sell it to a particular customer, and the right to refuse was taken away by that clause. He did not think such a clause ought to be passed on Friday afternoon in a Bill introduced by a private Member. If brewers or licensed victuallers did not desire to sell barley beer to the public, all they had to do was to charge a prohibitive price, and therefore the public would not necessarily be able to get what they wanted under the Bill. Supporters of the Bill declared that barley beer was a better and a cheaper beer and that the public preferred it. If he accepted that statement as true, it appeared to him an extraordinary thing that anybody should refuse to sell to the public what they could sell more cheaply and what the public preferred, and should insist on selling to the public instead the worse and dearer product which they did not want. If the Bill passed strong pressure would naturally be put upon the Inland Revenue to carry out a duty which they said they were incapable of discharging, namely, of seeing that the brewers did not evade its provisions. In the interests of the Treasury and of the Inland Revenue also, therefore, he expressed an opinion unfavourable to the Second Reading. The argument that this Bill stood on the same footing as the Butter Bill rested on a misconception of the facts. Beer made from barley substitutes possessed exactly the same constituents as beer made from barley. The article produced was the same article, no chemical analysis discovering any difference. In the case of margarine something was produced which looked like butter, but which was not butter and which no chemical analysis could find to be butter. That was the distinction between the two cases. There could be no suggestion of fraud in the sale of this beer, and the public seemed to be satisfied with it. On every ground no sufficient reason had been shown for this Bill's being read a second time.

*MR. BELLOC (Salford, S.), in supporting the Bill, stated that in the constituency which he represented a number of people had died from drinking impure beer. What was still more important, for electoral purposes, a great number survived. So far as his memory served, something like this happened. When the friends of those who died from arsenical poisoning brought an action, the brewer said, "I am innocent. I used glucose." They then brought an action againt the glucose manufacturer. He said, "I am innocent. I used pure sulphuric acid." The sulphuric acid manufacturer said that there was "no more than the usual proportion of arsenic." Unfortunately there was, and by the use of these three different (or identical) substances used in the making of beer a large number of people suffered acute agony. He stood there for those people. Those who listened to the debate on the Address would know that they had all been returned for a large number of different reasons, but among the other questions was the question of pure beer. He wanted to insist upon the fact that they were a representative as well as a deliberative body, and there was not the slightest doubt that if they put this Bill to the votes of the people they would get an overwhelming majority in its favour. They were told that the populace did not understand the deep chemical mysteries by which the preparation of beer was ruled. The Financial Secretary to the Treasury had said with some force that it was impossible to tell the difference between beer brewed from malt and hops and beer brewed in other fashions. So far from that being the case, the hon. Member for Newport stated that he had been at some pains to obtain very good English beer by special contract. The hon. Member asked whether there was anyone else in the same circumstances. There was himself. He went to the town of Arundel, and he asked at the brewery whose honest and familiar smell he had known from childhood, "Can I have English beer made out of English malt and hops?" They said, "You can. It is a little more trouble, and you will have to pay a little more for it, but others are asking for it." Consequently he had it. It was not a question of chemical analysis. That would not tell them the difference between good beer and bad any more than mathematics would tell them the difference between a good picture and a bad. There were very few days when he could not say before he went to bed that he had drunk two pints of beer. Whether he drank beer made out of the elements of which beer had been made for hundreds of years or beer made out of chemical substitutes, made all the difference in the world to his health. No scientist in the world would persuade him out of his personal conclusions, as for instance, his religion, his taste in art, or his palate. The Financial Secretary to the Treasury had said that the Treasury could not enforce the Bill, that they would think it unwise in the interests of public economy to enforce it. The Treasury, he should have thought, existed for the people of England.

MR. McKENNA: I did not say the Treasury would think it unwise to interfere. I said they had no means of interfering or enforcing the Bill.

*MR. BELLOC: Then let us alter that in Committee. When a man broke the law there were usually ways of punishing him. He had now and then broken the law, and he had not found it was very difficult for people to get at him. He did not know what it would cost to have inspectors popping in now and then to see how the beer was being made. No European nation except ourselves hesitated in the matter. People could not drink impure or chemical beer in Germany, but when they were having German beer in England they could hardly have anything else, because for the export trade no restrictions were thought advisable. The hon. Member for Lincoln had raised the temperance argument. Now there were those who thought, as do the Mahometans, that the drinking of fermented liquor was morally wrong. People who thought that were a very small and negligible minority of the English nation.

Mr. CHARLES ROBERTS: From what words of mine does the hon. Member deduce that inference?

*Mr. BELLOC: I say it from a general knowledge of the hon. Member's opinions. He (Mr. Belloc) knew many men of comfortable lives who held that view, but on a programme of nothing but that they could not get elected for any constituency in England. On the other hand, there was a wide and reasonable organisation, to which he did not say he belonged, but for which he could not but have sympathy, for doing something practical and immediate for interfering with the enormous evils which drink was causing to the country. The immediate suppression of the tied-house system was one plan. But he believed that purity of liquor had a great deal to do with it also. He would not say that no one had been brought to ruin by drinking pure English beer, or good red wine, or long-matured spirit; but the effect on character, the creation of a craving, and the general deterioration from the moderate to the heavy drinker were mainly produced, after the tied-house system, by the badness of the liquor consumed. He was bound to vote for the Bill. Details could be remedied later. At this moment they were voting on the simple principle whether people should be able to obtain a liquor which their forefathers at least found to be perfectly healthy, and on which the English race had been built up.

*Mr. EVERETT (Suffolk, Woodbridge) said that this Bill dealt with the favourite national beverage of the English people. In the part of England from which he came beer was beloved by the people whilst at their work beyond anything else. They regarded it as one of Heaven's best gifts to comfort men in their hard toil. In the early days of his recollection this beer was brewed in almost every house in rural districts—the mansion, the farmhouse, and the cottage—and the only obstacle to it was the malt tax. He was old enough to remember the long agitation that was carried on to obtain the repeal of that tax, and he was glad to remember that Richard Cobden, who was a Sussex farmer's son, was a strong advocate for its repeal. The tax was repealed by Mr. Gladstone in 1880, and transferred to beer; and since that time the materials for brewing had been available at half the prices that used to prevail. At the time Mr. Gladstone repealed the tax, he put a licence of 6s. a year on the cottage brewer, occupier of a house of £8, or under, and he had the privilege in the first Parliament to which he was elected, in company with his friend Mr. Jasper More, then Member for Shropshire, of going to the late Sir William Harcourt, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and beseeching him in the name of the labourers of England to remove the tax from cottage brewers. Sir William Harcourt acceded to their request, and the act obtained the gratitude of the agricultural workers. He had no doubt that when he had passed away he would be remembered more for the part he had taken in making the national beverage more freely accessible to the labourers than for anything else he had done on earth. As regarded home-brewed beer this Bill was not wanted. He was thankful to say that in most of the cottages in Suffolk the people still brewed for themselves, and he believed that every man who did so was a sober and a temperate man. Those who did not brew for themselves had to obtain their beer from the public house; and that sort of beer got into the head and did harm, which was never occasioned by the consumption of home-brewed beer. He wished to enter his protest against the monstrous system prevailing in this country in regard to the sale of what was, if not one of the prime necessities of life, at least, one of the prime comforts to the working man. The result of the monopoly system was that people had to pay something like double the amount they ought to pay for their best loved drink. The price of brewing materials had gone down one-half, but the benefit went into the rich brewer's pocket, and the purchaser had no say in the matter either of the price or of the quality of the beer. In most cases the sale was in the hands of brewers who absolutely controlled the character of the drink. He did not regard this Bill as an ideal one. The ideal Bill would be one which would put the sale of the national drink under the control of the people themselves, so that they could regulate the price and quality. It was hoped when Mr. Gladstone transferred the tax from malt to beer that the beer-drinking people, who were the vast majority of the voters, would have something to say about that; and it was hoped to see the time when, as in the wine-drinking and cider-drinking countries or counties, the people in the beer-drinking counties would have their beer supplied without taxation, in open competition as milk or bread is, of a good quality, and at a cheap price. If supplied in that way it would not, he believed, be abused to the extent it was now, and good bread and good meat washed down with good wholesome beer at a cheap price would add very much to the comfort of the people. He did not like this Bill; it was a very crude measure. He did not see why they should limit the march of an industry; and if beer could be brewed more cheaply, and of a better quality from other materials, or by the addition of materials other than those from which their forefathers brewed, he saw no objection. He had made up his mind, however, to vote for the Bill as a protest against the monstrous system under which the national beverage was now sold.

*Mr. LUPTON (Lincolnshire, Sleaford) said that he represented a constituency to which this question was of some importance; but he was in this dilemma: if he voted against this Bill he would incur the severe displeasure of a great number of his constituents, and if he voted in favour of it, he might be the means of doing them a great injury. So between their displeasure and their welfare he was in somewhat of a difficulty. He wanted to ask the promoters of the Bill one or two questions. In the first place could they not stretch the limit in regard to the percentage of sugar, and make the limit of malt 70 or 75 per cent.? He had talked with a farmer, who was a brewer, and also a public-house keeper, who had told him that he could not brew good beer from barley-malt grown in his district with such a limit as 85 per cent. It was all very well for the firm of Bass and other great brewers, who had a great name and could get top prices for their liquor, and so could give the highest price for barley; but how about the second-class brewer who had not the name, and if he could not buy the second class barley for beer-making, what was to become of the farmer? If he were to support a proposal which would preclude a great part of the barley grown from being used for brewing purposes, he would do his constituents much injury. If the promoters would lower the limit for barley malt to 70 or 75 per cent., it would materially alter his opinion of the Bill. He had not much confidence in temperance reform by law. This House had been making temperance reforms for the last 200 years, and every reform they passed led to a greater consumption of wine, beer, and spirits. Nor did he object to the Bill on the ground that it was protectionist. He was a determined free trader, but in this question they were dealing with public houses in which there was no such thing as free trade. If it were right that they should be restricted in number and licensed, it might also be right that the Government should say what kind of liquor should be sold if there were a demand for a certain quality. But coming to the details of the Bill he found great difficulty, and he hesitated to vote for the Second Reading unless he was certain the details were to be modified. He should be sorry to face any public-house keepers in his division if he voted for a Bill containing the great penalties now in the measure, because mistakes might be made which would lay the publican open to these heavy fines. They had heard a great deal about deleterious substances in beer. As had been pointed out, one of the great attributes of the water that had helped to make the great names of Bass, Allsopp, and other Burton brewers was that it came from a certain geological formation in the district containing sulphate of lime. If that were so, another brewer who had to get his water from new red sandstone should be allowed to add sulphate of lime to make his water identical with that of the brewers whose water came from soil of a suitable formation. Then he thought the Bill would be injurious to trade. He did not want it to be supposed that he was an advocate of the drink trade; but there were many in the drink trade in his constituency, and he hesitated to do them injury, which did no good to anyone else. The Bill would give a great advertisement to the foreign manufacturer, as was the case when the words "made in Germany" were required to be stamped on foreign-made goods. He would like to ask how far the Adulteration of Foods Act could be made effective in dealing with that horrid stuff which made a man so thirsty after drinking a glass of beer. This Bill would not deal with the question of salt or some chemical which caused thirst and injury to those who drank it being mixed in the beer after it had left the brewer. He was entirely in favour of a light wholesome beer, and he hoped they would get over the Inland Revenue in that respect. It was proposed some years ago to use saccharine in the making of beer; but the Chancellor of the Exchequer would not permit it, because it would make a light beer and so deprive the revenue of some of the money they now obtained. If this Bill were a good Bill he should be glad to help it, but he was not yet sure that it was. Before he actually decided how he should vote he should like to have an answer to the questions he had put. An objection which was certainly fatal to the Bill unless amended was the new principle which would be introduced into this country, namely, that a licensed house keeper should be compelled to sell alcoholic drink. There should certainly be an undertaking that that would be altered in Committee.

Question put.

The House divided;—Ayes, 109; Noes, 164. (Division List No. 17.)

AYES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
Abraham, William (Rhondda)
Acland, Francis Dyke
Adkins, W. Ryland
Agar-Robartes, Hon. T. C.
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Balfour, Capt. C. B. (Hornsey)
Baring, Godfrey (Isle of Wight)
Barlow, Percy (Bedford)
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Beauchamp, E.
Beckett, Hon. Gervase
Bellairs, Carlyon
Belloc, Hiliare Joseph Peter R.
Bertram, Julius
Billson, Alfred
Bridgeman, W. Clive
Cairns, Thomas
Cecil, Lord John P. Joicey
Cecil, Lord R. (Marylebone, E.)
Channing, Francis Allston
Clancy, John Joseph
Cleland, J. W.
Cogan, Denis J.
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Crean, Eugene
Delany, William
Dillon, John
Dobson, Thomas W.
Donelan, Captain A.
Duffy, William J.
Esmonde, Sir Thomas
Essex, R. W.
Everett, R. Lacey
Ffrench, Peter
Field, William
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Fletcher, J. S.
Gardner, Col. A. (Herefordsh. S.)
Ginnell, L.
Grant, Corrie
Hamilton, Marquess of
Hammond, John
Harrington, Timothy
Harrison-Broadley, Col. H. B.
Healy, Timothy Michael
Hedges, A. Paget
Helmsley, Viscount
Henry, Charles S.
Hervey, F. W. F (Bury S. Edm'ds
Hobart, Sir Robert
Hunt, Rowland
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kekewich, Sir George
Kennedy, Vincent Paul
Kenyon-Slaney, Rt. Hon. Col.
Kilbride, Denis
Lamb, Edmund G. (Leominster
Lambton, Hon. Frederick Wm.
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Long, Col. Charles W. (Evesh'm
Lundon, W.
Marks, G. Croydon (Launceston)
Marks, Harry Hananel (Kent)
Masterman, C. F. G.
Meehan, Patrick A.
Montagu, E. S.
Morgan, G. Hay (Cornwall)
Morton, Alpheus Cleophas
Murphy, John
Napier, T. B.
Newnes, F. (Notts., Bassetlaw)
Nicholson, Charles N. (Doncast'r
Norman, Henry
O'Brien, Kendal (Tipperary Mid
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W.)
O'Kelly, Conor (Mayo, N.)
Palmer, Sir Charles Mark
Pearce, Robert (Staffs. Leek)
Philipps, Owen C. (Pembroke)
Price, Robert John (Norfolk, E.)
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Renton, Major Leslie
Ridsdale, E. A.
Roche, John (Galway, East)
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Sandys, Lieut.-Col. Thos. Myles
Shaw, Charles Edw. (Stafford)
Smeaton, Donald Mackenzie
Soares, Ernest J.
Stanley, Hn. A. Lyulph (Chesh.
Starkey, John R.
Talbot, Rt. Hn. J. G. (Oxf'd Univ.
Thomson, W. Mitchell (Lanark
Waldron, Laurence Ambrose
Walker, H. De R. (Leicester)
Ward, John (Stoke upon Trent
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Wason, John Cathcart (Orkney)
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
White, Patrick (Meath, North)
Williamson, G. H. (Worcester)
Wilson, A. Stanley (York, E. R.)
Wilson, J. H. (Middlesbrough)
Wilson, W. T. (Westhoughton)
Wodehouse, Lord (Norfolk, Mid)
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE AYES.—Mr. Courthope and Mr. Barnard.

NOES.

Agnew, George William
Anstruther-Gray, Major
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Asquith,Rt. Hn. HerbertHenry
Baker, Joseph A.(Finsbury, E.)
Baring, Hon. Guy (Winchester)
Barnes, G. N.
Beale, W. P.
Benn,W.(T'wr Hamlets,S.Geo.
Bowerman, C. W.
Brace, William
Branch, James
Brigg, John
Bright, J. A.
Brocklehurst, W. D.
Brooke, Stopford
Brotherton, Edward Allen
Brunner,J. F. L. (Lancs.,Leigh)
Bryce, J. A. (Inverness Burghs)
Burns, Rt.Hon. John
Buxton,Rt.Hn. Sydney Charles
Byles, William Pollard
Cameron, Robert
Carlile, E. Hildred
Cherry, R. R.
Churchill, Winston Spencer
Clarke, C. Goddard (Peckham)
Cobbold, Felix Thornley
Collins, Stephen (Lambeth)
Collins,Sir Wm.J.(S.Pancras,W
Cooper, G. J.
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Cox, Harold
Craik, Sir Henry
Crooks, William
Crosfield, A. H.
Crossley, William J.
Davies,David (MontgomeryCo.
Davies, M. Vaughan (Cardigan
Davies, Timothy (Fulham)
Devlin,CharlesRamsay(Galway
Dewar, John A. (Inverness-sh.
Dixon-Hartland,Sir FredDixon
Duckworth, James
Duncan, C.(Barrow-in-Furness)
Edwards, Frank (Radnor)
Evans, Samuel T.
Findlay, Alexander
Furness, Sir Christopher
Gibbs, G. A. (Bristol, West)
Gladstone,Rt.Hn.Herbert John
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Guest, Hon. Ivor Churchill
Gulland, John W.
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Haddock, George R.
Haldane, Rt. Hon. Richard B.
Hart-Davies, T.
Herbert, T. Arnold (Wycombe)
Higham, John Sharp
Hope,W.Bateman(Somerset,N.
Hudson, Walter
Illingworth, Percy H.
Jackson, R. S.
Jones,David Brynmor(Swansea
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Jones, William (Carnarvonshire
Laidlaw, Robert
Lamb, Ernest H. (Rochester)
Lamont, Norman
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid
Leese,Sir JosephF.(Accrington
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Lehmann, R. C.
Lewis, John Herbert
Lough, Thomas
Lowe, Sir Francis William
Lupton, Arnold
Luttrell, Hugh Courtenay
Macdonald,J.M. (FalkirkB'ghs
Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J.
M'Crae, George
M'Kenna, Reginald
M'Killop, W.
Maddison, Frederick
Manfield, Harry (Northants)
Marnham, F. J.
Mason, James F. (Windsor)
Menzies, Walter
Meysey-Thompson, Major E.C.
Micklem, Nathaniel
Mooney, J. J.
Moss, Samuel
Myer, Horatio
Nolan, Joseph
Nussey, Thomas Willans
Nuttall, Harry
Partington, Oswald
Pearce, William (Limehouse)
Pease,Herbert Pike(Darlington
Pickersgill, Edward Hare
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Radford, G. H.
Rea, Russell (Gloucester)
Rea, Walter Russell (Scarboro'
Redmond, William (Clare)
Rees, J. D.
Remnant, James Farquharson
Rendall, Athelstan
Richards, T.F. (Wolverh'mpt'n
Roberts, Charles H. (Lincoln)
Roberts, G. H. (Norwich)
Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Roberts,S.(Sheffield, Ecclesall)
Robertson, J. M. (Tyneside)
Robertson,SirG.Scott (Bradf'rd
Robinson, S.
Roche, Augustine (Cork)
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Rose, Charles Day
Runciman, Walter
Rutherford, V. H. (Brentford)
Rutherford, W. W. (Liverpool)
Scarisbrick, T. T. L.
Schwann, C. Duncan (Hyde)
Schwann,Chas.E. (Manchester)
Sears, J. E.
Shaw, Rt. Hon. T. (Hawick B.)
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Smith,F.E.(Liverpool, Walton)
Spicer, Albert
Stanger, H. Y.
Steadman, W. C.
Stewart, Halley (Greenock)
Strauss, E. A. (Abingdon)
Stuart, James (Sunderland)
Sullivan, Donal
Thomas,Sir A.(Glamorgan, E.)
Thomas,David Alfred (Merthyr
Thornton, Percy M.
Tomkinson, James
Torrance, A. M.
Toulmin, George
Verney, F. W.
Vincent, Col. Sir C. E. Howard
Vivian, Henry
Walker, Col. W. H. (Lancashire
Wallace, Robert
Wason, Eugene (Clackmannan)
Watt, H. Anderson
White, J. D. (Dumbartonshire)
Whitehead, Rowland
Whiteley, George (York, W.R.)
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Wiles, Thomas
Williams, Osmond (Merioneth)
Wilson, Henry J.(York, W.R.)
Woodhouse,Sir J T(Huddersf'd
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart
Young, Samuel
Younger, George

TELLERS FOR THE NOES.—Sir Edward Sassoon and Mr. Paul.

Words added.

Main Question, as amended, put, and agreed to. Second Reading put off for six months.

PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS (DISQUALIFICATION REMOVAL) BILL.

Order for Second Reading read.

*MR. MARNHAM (Surrey, Chertsey), said that as a Member rising to address the House for the first time he asked for the kindness and consideration which had been accorded so often during the past few weeks. The fortune of the ballot enabled him to bring forward this Bill, and he asked the House to grant it a Second Reading. Its object was to remove one of the many anomalies and hardships which the present registration laws imposed. The need for a drastic reform of those laws had been proved by the many Bills which had been brought in to deal with the various hardships which the country suffered under them. There were many thousands of British workmen who were never able to exercise their right of citizenship in consequence of the present state of the law. This Bill was a very small one and he claimed that it was a non-Party measure. It was based upon the Medical Relief Act passed in the year 1885. That Bill did away with the disfranchisement of working men who were compelled by sickness to apply for medical relief. It applied to more than giving a bottle of physic or a box of pills, for it included meat, broth, wine, and anything else that the doctor in his judgment thought fit to order. The necessity for this Bill had been brought home very strongly in Chertsey, where a number of men were struck off the register because during the previous winter they had been obliged to go to the labour yard for temporary relief. The same thing happened in other parishes all over the country, and the consequence was that many thousands of honest and hard-working men were every year struck off the register. The work given in labour yards was not such as anyone would volunteer to do except under painful necessity. In the twentieth century to penalise men by taking away from them the rights of citizenship when they were driven by poverty and distress to seek relief, was a very great hardship. The preamble gave full information as to the purposes of the Bill. The second clause provided that such men as he had alluded to under the circumstances described would retain their votes for all purposes such as parliamentary, municipal or burgess elections, or any election under any statute. There was a saving clause preventing men who obtained relief of this kind from voting at the election of guardians. That provision had been taken from the Medical Relief Bill. Clause 3 was simply an instruction to the registration officers to set to work this year in time for the registration in September. Next year the county council election would take place, and he was anxious that these men should have a vote upon that occasion, when questions would arise which would very much affect the welfare of the working classes. Therefore the third clause hurried up the registration in time to enable those men to be put upon the register next year. He hoped the House would accept the principle of the measure at any rate, and any amendments which were found to be necessary could be dealt with in Committee.

MR. HAVELOCK WILSON (Middlesbrough) said this was a very important Bill affecting the interests of labour. He remembered that in 1892, during the distress in consequence of the great strike in the county of Durham, 3,500 men were obliged to accept parochial relief at the stone yard, and the following year they were struck off the register. That was a very hard case which this Bill would remedy, and he had much pleasure in seconding it.

Motion made and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

*MR. C. DUNCAN (Barrow-in-Furness) said it was a cruel thing that such an enormous number of men should lose their votes in this way through circumstances over which they had no control. He hoped a division would be taken, so that they might have an opportunity of showing the people of this country that they meant business in this matter.

MR. G. CROYDON MARKS (Cornwall, Launceston) said that in the cases dealt with by this Bill the payments were made only for actual work done. Men were frequently thrown out of employment in all large centres of industry through no fault of their own, and, not being able to find other employment locally at the moment, they were given employment by the public authority in the division in which they lived, and for accepting that employment under the present law they lost their rights of citizenship. In the last Parliament doles were given to the landlords, the farmers got something, and so did the Church and other interests, and he thought it was now time that the labourer had something done to prevent his being disfranchised because he happened to be thrown out of employment and forced to accept work provided for him by the local authority. He had the strongest sympathy with this measure, and he hoped there would not be too much talk in connection with it.

*SIR FRANCIS POWELL (Wigan) said he hoped the House would bear with him while he stated some of the difficulties which he felt in regard to this Bill. The preamble spoke of "deserving workmen," and had those words appeared in the Bill he should have asked for some definition of that term. They did not, however, appear in the Bill, and therefore it was no part of the question with which they were dealing. The hon. Member who introduced this Bill spoke of it as a small measure. So it was, but it involved a very large principle. He certainly thought that before they changed the relative position of those in receipt of relief to those who were not, they should examine carefully their action upon this question in the past. This subject was of enormous magnitude, and the measure only dealt with a mere corner of it. It was extremely unfortunate that the House of Commons should be invited on a Friday afternoon at so late an hour to enter into a discussion of these questions. If a change of the law was required in this respect there were other claims for reforms which were very much stronger than those put forward in support of this Bill. The Bill exercised no discrimination in the selection of its subjects, one of the points enforced by the recent Report of the Vagrancy Committee. Another reason why the Bill should not be proceeded with now was that the point with which it dealt was one of the subjects referred to the Royal Commission at present sitting. Although this Bill discriminated in the preamble by using the word "deserving," there was no such discrimination in the enacting clauses of the Bill. Those who knew the law in Switzerland and other countries would agree with him that there must be some discrimination. How could they treat a person who was little more than a tramp or a vagrant exactly in the same way as they treated the deserving persons to whom reference had been made by preceding speakers? That to him was an aspect of the case which ought to be fully and carefully investigated. They ought not to forget that the whole of this question had been referred to a highly skilled and a most competent Commission.

And, it being half-past Five of the clock, the Debate stood adjourned.

Whereupon Mr. SPEAKER, in pursuance of Standing Order No. 3, adjourned the House without Question put.

Adjourned at twenty-eight minutes before Six o'clock till Monday next.

[APPENDICES.

APPENDIX I.

MEMORANDUM OF THE SECRETARY OF STATE RELATING TO THE ARMY ESTIMATES FOR 1906–7.

TOTAL ESTIMATES.

The Army Estimates of 1906–07, viewed as a whole, embody no far reaching change or new departure, but provide the money necessary to carry on the Army on its present footing for another year. I do not desire to attempt the introduction of serious changes in policy without taking full time for their consideration.

The total of the Estimates, 29,796,000*l.*, shows a decrease of 17,000*l.* on that of 1905–6; but though the reduction is thus small, considerable economies have had to be effected in order to provide funds for certain minor but important measures as to the necessity of which there is no doubt, and to avoid the large increase arising from the growth of certain charges. Examples of these are—

	£
Increased cost of Army Reserve	220,000
Increased charge for stores and clothing, due to the approaching exhaustion of the surplus stocks available from the late war	290,000
Increased charge for service of loans	60,000
Increased charge for pensions	27,000
	597,000

In addition, the assignment to India in 1905–06 of a share of the output of rifles and small-arm ammunition had the effect of relieving Vote 9 of that year of some 185,000*l.*, for which in 1906–07 provision has again to be made within the total of Army Estimates. Before, therefore, there could be any question of a reduction of the total, increases to the extent of over 780,000*l.* had to be absorbed.

ESTABLISHMENT AND STRENGTH OF THE REGULAR ARMY.

The real reduction in the establishment in 1906–07 is about 5,300 officers and men, as explained at page 4 of the Estimates. The chief causes are the disappearance of the Royal Garrison Regiment which has now been almost completely disbanded, the reduction of some 1,300 officers and men of the Garrison Artillery at Colonial stations, referred to below, the reduction of the Royal Engineers by one Survey company no longer required for the Ordnance Survey, and by about 550 officers and men in consequence of the transfer of submarine defences to naval control, and the disbandment of certain Colonial units from the same cause.

There will be again a double contingent of men passed to the Reserve, viz., the three years' men enlisted in 1903–04, as well as the usual contingent of seven (or eight) years' men under the earlier system; and the strength of the Reserve is expected to rise as high as 122,000 in consequence. With the present term of enlistment of nine years' Colour service in the Infantry, it is not to be expected that this efflux will be altogether balanced by the influx of recruits, and the strength with the Colours at home is not unlikely to fall below establishment ; but steps are being taken to maintain the forces in India and the Colonies at their due strength.

It is not intended to proceed further with the formation of a separate branch of the Regular Army for home service with a two years' term of Colour service.

COLONIAL GARRISONS.

Changes in Admiralty requirements have rendered it possible to reduce Colonial garrisons (with the approval of the Committee of Imperial Defence) by about 3,000 officers and men, in addition to reductions of 10,500 effected in the Estimates of 1905–06. The reductions in 1906–07 include the whole garrisons of Halifax (Nova Scotia) and Esquimalt, the responsibility for the defence of which has been transferred to the Dominion Government in accordance with the announcement made by my predecessor in 1905–06.

With the exception of a few officers and men whose services have been temporarily lent to the Colony, the British garrison of Halifax has been brought home, and that of Esquimalt will follow shortly. The Dominion Government pays the cost of all troops at these stations, retained at the request of the Colony, as from 1st July, 1905.

MEDICAL ESTABLISHMENTS.

Provision is made to begin the formation of a Reserve of Civilian Surgeons, with some training in the special requirements of Army Field Hospitals, to be available on mobilization for service abroad or at home. Steps are also contemplated for providing on mobilization the necessary numbers of medical subordinates, both fully trained and auxiliary.

MILITIA.

An experiment will be tried during the winter of 1906–7 with twenty selected Militia battalions, the recruits of which will be drilled for six months, on enlistment by their own (Militia) officers. In the training season of 1907, these batalions will be trained for six (instead of four) weeks. Moreover, recruits of these battalions will not be allowed to enlist into the Line until they have completed one annual training in addition to six months' recruit drill. The effect of these changes on recruiting, both for the Militia and for the Line, and on the efficiency of the selected battalions, will be carefully watched ; and meanwhile no change in Militia Establishments is made.

VOLUNTEERS.

The Estimate provides for the staff necessary for brigading the whole of the Volunteer Infantry under Brigadiers, who will be responsible throughout the year for the training and inspection of their battalions. Apart from this, no important change in the establishment or conditions of service of the Force is proposed for 1906–07. The terms relating to camps will be the same as in 1905, attendance at camp, as a condition of efficiency and the limit of minimum numbers for a "Class I" camp continuing in abeyance.

The strength of the Force on 1st January last was 241,708 as compared with 245,525 on 1st January, 1905.

APPENDIX I.

SHORT RIFLE.

In accordance with an undertaking given by my predecessor to the House of Commons in the early part of 1905, further trials with the short rifle were made. For this purpose an experimental issue was made to the various commands at home, and reports were called for from India, where the troops were already in possession of the rifle. The reports received from the troops both at home and in India were of such a character as to determine the Army Council to proceed with the manufacture of the short rifle, and its issue to the Infantry at home is now proceeding.

A considerable portion of the output of rifles in 1905–06 was allotted to India, but in 1906–07 this will not be the case, and the supply of arms to troops on the British Establishment will be greatly expedited, there being a total increase of 212,000*l.* in the amount provided for this purpose in Vote 9.

It is calculated that by the end of 1906–07 we shall have a sufficient number of the new short rifles to completely re-arm the whole of our Regular troops at home and in the Colonies, together with their Reservists, in addition to a considerable number of reserve arms.

RE-ARMAMENT OF HORSE AND FIELD ARTILLERY.

The original programme contemplated the provision of a certain amount of material for issue to India before the re-armament of the batteries on the Home or Colonial Establishments. Circumstances, however, arose which brought about a modification of this original arrangement, and during the autumn of 1905 it was decided to suspend the further issue of the new equipments to India and to proceed with the re-armament of certain batteries at home before completing the Indian issues. In pursuance of this decision, issue of the new equipments to batteries at home is now proceeding. In the course of manufacture certain minor technical difficulties of construction have come to light, as is not unusual in cases where the material is of a novel and complicated character; but these have now been completely surmounted. Although they were the cause of some delay, it is not anticipated that they will appreciably, if at all, retard the completion of the whole programme by the date originally contemplated.

SUBMARINE MINING.

As announced last year by my predecessor, the responsibility for the submarine defences at all ports, at home and abroad, has been transferred to the Admiralty, and the mines, with the vessels and gear connected with them, have all been handed over to the Navy.

The relief thus afforded to Army Estimates, in the provision and maintenance of material, is substantial; but the reduction of personnel is not as large as might at first sight seem due. The reason for this is that the Royal Engineer Establishments for submarine mining also found the personnel for manning the electric lights connected with the Artillery defence of ports, and owing to the continued increase in the number of these lights without corresponding increase in men, only a small proportion of the so-called submarine mining units have been in recent years appropriated to "aquatic" duties.

Advantage has been taken of the opportunity afforded by the transfer of the mines to consolidate the establishments for the remaining Engineer duties at defended ports, (electric lights, telegraphs, telephones, &c.), and owing to this and to the withdrawal of troops from certain Colonial stations, establishments show a net reduction of some 550 Royal Engineers of all ranks, and of some 170 native submarine miners

The future of the Militia and Volunteer Submarine Mining units is at present under consideration.

EDUCATIONAL ESTABLISHMENTS.

Advantage has been taken of vacant rooms at the Royal Military Academy, Woolwich, to accommodate an additional class of "Sandhurst" cadets there, so increasing the supply of officers to the Cavalry and Infantry.

A Committee of representatives of the Treasury, Education Department and War Office has been appointed to consider whether any reduction can be effected in the number of regimental and garrison schools now maintained, by making use of the schools of local education authorities.

NON-EFFECTIVE CHARGES.

The Non-effective Votes, as already stated, show an increase of 27,000*l*., owing to the growth of the charges for retired pay of officers and for soldiers' pensions. These votes are now about half-a-million higher than they were before the war, and their present tendency is upward rather than downward, as the charge for retired pay of officers, which was instituted after the abolition of the purchase system, has not yet reached its full growth; while the effect of the increases in the strength of the Army during the last twenty years, and of the more liberal scales of pension granted in accordance with public sentiment, is also now being felt.

R. B. HALDANE.

2nd March, 1906.

APPENDIX II.

PUBLIC BILLS

DEALT WITH IN VOLUME CLIII.

Those marked thus * are Government Bills. The figures in parentheses in the last column refer to the page in this volume. "[H.L.]" following title indicates that the Bill originated in the House of Lords.

(A.) HOUSE OF LORDS.

Title of Bill.	Brought in by	Progress.
Elections (Meetings in Schoolrooms) [H.L.]	*Lord Burghclere*	Read 1^a 13th March (1066)
*Judicature [H.L.]	*Lord Chancellor*	Read 2^a 13th March (1062) Committee } Report } 15th March (1369)
Limited Partnership [H.L.]	*Lord Avebury*	Read 2^o 15th March (1365)
Marine Insurance [H.L.]	*Earl of Halsbury*	Committee } Report } 6th March (218) Read 3^a and passed 8th March (574)
Merchant Shipping (Aliens) [H.L.]	*Lord Muskerry*	Read 1^a 8th March (571)
*Naval Prize [H.L.]	*Lord Chancellor*	Read 2^a 13th March (1061) Committee } Report } 15th March (1369)
Patent Designs and Trade Marks (Registration of Patent Agents) [H.L.]	*Lord Coleridge*	Read 1^a 13th March (1066)
Poisons and Pharmacy [H.L.]	*Earl of Crewe*	Read 1^a 8th March (571)
Polling Arrangements Parliamentary Boroughs [H.L.]	*Lord Monkswell*	Read 1^a 5th March (6) Read 2^a 12th March (852) Committee } Report } 13th March (1063) Read 3^a and passed 15th March (1369)

(A.) HOUSE OF LORDS—*continued.*

Title of Bill.	Brought in by	Progress.
Polling Districts (County Councils) [H.L.]	*Lord Monkswell*	Read 1^a 5th March (6) Read 2^a 12th March (851) Committee Report } 13th March, (1063) Read 3^a and passed 15th March (1369)
*Prevention of Corruption [H.L.]	*Lord Chancellor*	Committee Report } 6th March (220) Read 3^a and passed 8th March (572)
*Prize Court [H.L.]	*Lord Chancellor*	Read 2^a 13th March 1062
Public Libraries Act (Extension) [H.L.]	*Lord James of Hereford*	Read 1^a 8th March (572)

(B.) HOUSE OF COMMONS

Title of Bill.	Brought in by	Progress.
Aged Pensioners	*Mr. Samuel Roberts*	Bill withdrawn 13th March (1122)
Agricultural Education in Elementary Schools	*Mr. Jesse Collings*	Read 1^o 8th March (655)
Character Note	*Mr. Bell*	Read 1^o 8th March (654)
Chartered Societies	*Mr. Harwood Banner*	Read 1^o 14th March (1266)
Coroners	*Mr. Luke White*	Read 1^o 14th March (1266)
Crofters' Holdings (Scotland) Acts Amendment	*Mr. Weir*	Read 1^o 6th March (323)
Cruelty to Animals	*Mr. Greenwood*	Read 1^o 7th March (464)
*Dogs	*Sir Ed. Strachey*	Read 1^o 7th March (464)
Dogs' Protection	*Mr. Ellis Griffith*	Read 1^o 5th March (110)
Ecclesiastical Disorders	*Mr. Carlile*	Bill withdrawn 6th March (319)
Education Authorities (Access to Books and Documents)	*Dr. Macnamara*	Read 1^o 13th March (1121)
Education (Provision of Meals) (Scotland)	*Mr. Barnes*	Read 1^o 12th March (943)
*Fertilisers and Feeding Stuffs	*Sir E. Strachey*	Read 1^o 7th March (464)

Title of Bill.	Brought in by	Progress.
Housing of the Working Classes	*Mr. Steadman*	Read 1° 15th March (1438)
Justices of the Peace	*Mr. Lutterell*	Read 1° 6th March (322)
Juvenile Smoking	*Dr. Macnamara*	Read 1° 7th March (464)
Labour Pensions	*Mr. Grove*	Bill withdrawn 13th March (1121)
Land Tenure	*Mr. Agar-Robartes*	Read 2° 9th March (776)
Land Valuation	*Mr. Dundas White*	Read 1° 8th March (654)
Leasehold Enfranchisement	*Mr. Maclean*	Read 1° 15th March (1439)
Licensed Premises (Ireland) (St. Patrick's Day)	*Mr. O'Mara*	Read 1° 7th March (464)
Local Authorities (Taxation and Purchase of Land)	*Dr. Macnamara*	Read 1° 15th March (1438)
Local Government (Scotland)	*Mr. Younger*	Bill withdrawn 9th March (847)
Local Government (Scotland) (No. 2)	*Major Anstruther-Grey*	Read 2° 7th March (565)
*Local Registration of Titles (Ireland)	*Mr. Cherry*	Read 1° 13th March (1122)
Male Offenders (Whipping)	*Mr. Lloyd Morgan*	Read 1° 8th March (654)
Marine Insurance [H.L.]		Read 1° 13th March (1124)
Market Gardeners' Compensation	*Col. Long*	Read 1° 13th March (1122)
Metropolitan Borough Councils Association	*Sir William Bull*	Read 1° 8th March (655)
Mines, etc. (Nationalisation)	*Mr. Thorne*	Read 1° 15th March (1,438)
Municipal Power	*Mr. Money*	Read 1° 12th March (942)
*Notice of Accidents	*Mr. Herbert Samuel*	Read 2° 6th March (358)
Old Age Pensions	*Mr. J. W. Wilson*	Bill withdrawn 13th March (1122)
Old Age Pensions (No. 2)	*Mr. Channing*	Bill withdrawn 12th March (942)
* Open Spaces.	*Sir Ed. Strachey*	Read 1° 7th March (464)
Parliamentary Elections (Disqualification Removal)	*Mr. Marnham*	Second Reading (adjourned) 16th March (1583)

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Places of Worship (Enfranchisement)	*Mr. Samuel Evans*	Read 1° 6th March (322)
*Police Superannuation	*Mr. Herbert Samuel*	Second Reading (adjourned) 6th March (379)
*Post Office (Money Orders)	*Mr. Buxton*	Read 1° 6th March (323)
*Prevention of Corruption [H.L.]	*Sir John Walton*	Read 1° 13th March (1121)
Purchase of Land (England and Wales)	*Mr. Jesse Collings*	Read 1° 8th March (655)
Pure Beer	*Mr. Courthope*	Second Reading (defeated) 16th March (1541)
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Salmon Fisheries (Ireland)	*Mr. Joyce*	Read 1° 12th March (942) Bill withdrawn 12th March (1052)
School Board Electorate (Scotland)	*Mr. Weir*	Read 1° 5th March (110)
*Seed Potatoes Supply (Ireland)	*Mr. Bryce*	Read 1° 12th March (943)
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LIST OF RULES, ORDERS, &c., which have been presented during the Session, and are required by Statute to lie for an appointed number of Days upon the Table of the House.

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Prisons (Scotland).—Copy of Rule made by the Secretary for Scotland with respect to the term of office of a Visiting Committee and the holding of the first meeting of a Visiting Committee [40 and 41 Vic., c. 53, s. 58]	2 March	40 days
Public Records (Northern Circuit).—Copy of Schedule containing a List and Particulars of Classes of Documents existing or accruing in the Office of the Clerk of Assize of the Northern Circuit which are not considered of sufficient public value to justify their preservation in the Public Record Office [40 and 41 Vic., c. 55, s. 1]	5 March	4 weeks
Public Records (Board of Agriculture and Fisheries).—Copy of Schedule containing a List and Particulars of Classes of Documents existing or accruing in the Office of the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries (Ordnance Survey Department) which are not considered of sufficient public value to justify their preservation in the Public Record Office [40 and 41 Vic., c. 55, s. 1]	5 March	4 weeks
Shop Hours Act, 1904.—Copy of Order made by the Council of the County Borough of Gateshead, and confirmed by the Secretary of State for the Home Department, fixing the Hours of Closing for certain Shops within the borough [4 Edw. VII., c. 31, s. 3 (3)]	7 March	40 days
Intermediate Education (Ireland).—Copy of Rule made by the Intermediate Education Board for Ireland making an alteration in the Honours Course, Irish, Middle Grade Programme, 1906 [41 and 42 Vic., c. 66, s. 6]	9 March	40 days
Education (Scotland) (Code 1906).—Copy of Code of Regulations for Day Schools, with Appendices, by the Lords of the Committee of the Privy Council on Education in Scotland [35 and 36 Vic., c. 62, s. 67]	12 March	One month
Factory and Workshop Acts (Dangerous and Unhealthy Industries).—Copy of Regulations, dated 26th February 1906, made by the Secretary of State for the Home Department, in pursuance of Section 79 of The Factory and Workshop Act, 1901, in respect of the processes of spinning and weaving flax and tow, and the processes incidental thereto [1 Edw. VII., c. 22, s. 84]	16 March	40 days

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[AUTHORISED EDITION].

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Bankruptcy Department, Board of Trade—£3, *Com.* Mar. 5,* 112, 173; *Rep.* Mar. 14,* 1267.

Board of Agriculture and Fisheries—£55,000, *Com.* Mar. 5,* 112, 173; *Rep.* Mar. 14,* 1267.

Board of Trade—£85,000, *Com.* Mar. 5,* 112, 173; *Rep.* Mar. 14,* 1267.

British Museum—£70,000, *Com.* Mar. 5,* 114, 175; *Rep.* Mar. 14,* 1269.

Broadmoor Criminal Lunatic Asylum—£12,000, *Com.* Mar. 5,* 113, 174; *Rep.* Mar. 14,* 1268.

Charity Commission—£15,000, *Com.* Mar. 5,* 112, 173; *Rep.* Mar. 14,* 1267.

Civil Service Commission—£17,000, *Com.* Mar. 5,* 112, 173; *Rep.* Mar. 14,* 1267.

Colonial Office—£25,000, *Com.* Mar. 5,* 112, 173; *Rep.* Mar. 14,* 1267.

Colonial Services—£370,000, *Com.* Mar. 5,* 114, 175; *Rep.* Mar. 14,* 1269.

County Courts—£5, *Com.* Mar. 5,* 113, 174; *Rep.* Mar. 14,* 1268.

Customs—£350,000, *Com.* Mar. 5,* 114, 175; *Rep.* Mar. 14,* 1270.

Cyprus—(Grant-in-Aid)—£27,000, *Com.* Mar. 5,* 114, 175; *Rep.* Mar. 14,* 1269.

Diplomatic and Consular Buildings—£54,000, *Com.* Mar. 5,* 112, 173; *Rep.* Mar. 14,* 1267.

Diplomatic and Consular Service—£250,000, *Com.* Mar. 5,* 111, 172; *Rep.* Mar. 14,* 1267.

Education, Board of—£7,000,000, *Com.* Mar. 5,* 114, 175; *Rep.* Mar. 14,* 1269

Exchequer and Audit Department—£25,000, *Com.* Mar. 5,* 112, 173; *Rep.* Mar. 14,* 1267.

Foreign Office—£24,000, *Com.* Mar. 5,* 112, 173; *Rep.* Mar. 14,* 1267.

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Friendly Societies Registry—£3,000, *Com.* Mar. 5,* 112, 173; *Rep.* Mar. 14,* 1267.

Harbours under Board of Trade—£6,000, *Com.* Mar. 5;* 112, 173; *Rep.* Mar. 14,* 1267.

Home Office—£66,000, *Com.* Mar. 5,* 111, 172; *Rep.* Mar. 14,* 1266.

House of Commons Offices—£15,000, *Com.* Mar. 5,* 112, 173; *Rep.* Mar. 14,* 1267.

House of Lords Offices—£7,000, *Com.* Mar. 5,* 112, 173; *Rep.* Mar. 14,* 1267.

Houses of Parliament Buildings—£20,000, *Com.* Mar. 5,* 112, 173; *Rep.* Mar. 14,* 1267.

Inland Revenue—£830,000, *Com.* Mar. 5,* 114, 175; *Rep.* Mar. 14,* 1270.

Ireland

Charitable Donations and Bequests—£1,000, *Com.* Mar. 5,* 113, 174; *Rep.* Mar. 14,* 1268.

Chief Secretary—£12,000, *Com.* Mar. 5,* 113, 174; *Rep.* Mar. 14,* 1268.

County Court Officers, etc.—£45,000 *Com.* Mar. 5,* 113, 174; *Rep.* Mar. 14,* 1269.

Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction—£80,000, *Com.* Mar. 5,* 113, 174; *Rep.* Mar. 14,* 1268.

Development Grant—£100,000, *Com.* Mar. 5,* 114, 175; *Rep.* Mar.* 14, 1270.

Dublin Metropolitan Police—£60,000 *Com.* Mar.* 5, 113, 174; *Rep.* Mar.* 14, 1269.

Dundrum Criminal Lunatic Asylum—£4,000, *Com.* Mar. 5,* 113, 174; *Rep.* Mar. 14,* 1269.

Education—£760,000, *Com.* Mar. 5,* 114, 175; *Rep.* Mar. 14,* 1269.

Endowed Schools Commissioners—£400, *Com.* Mar. 5,* 114. *Rep.* Mar. 14,* 1269.

Hospitals, etc.—£17,000, *Com.* Mar. 5,* 114, 175; *Mar. 14,* 1269.

Land Commission—£90,000, *Com.* Mar, 5,* 113, 174; *Rep.* Mar. 14,* 1269.

Law Charges and Criminal Prosecutions—£30,000, *Com.* Mar. 5,* 113, 174; *Rep.* Mar. 14,* 1269.

Local Government Board—£25,000, *Com.* Mar. 5,* 113, 174; *Rep.* Mar. 14,* 1268.

Lord-Lieutenant's Household—£2,000 *Com.* Mar. 5,* 113, 174; *Rep. Mar. 14,* 1268.

National Gallery—£2,500, *Com.* Mar. 5,* 114, 175; *Rep.* Mar. 14,* 1269.

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  Queen's Colleges—£2,500, Com.* Mar. 5, 114, 175; Rep.* Mar. 14, 1269.
  Railways—£35,000, Com.* Mar. 5, 112, 173; Rep.* Mar. 14, 1267.
  Reformatory and Industrial Schools—£55,000, Com.* Mar. 5, 113, 174; Rep.* Mar. 14, 1269.
  Registrar-General's Office — £5,000, Com.* Mar. 5, 113, 174; Rep.* Mar. 14, 1268.
  Royal Irish Constabulary—£600,000, Com.* Mar. 5, 113, 174; Rep.* Mar. 14, 1269.
  Supreme Court of Judicature, etc.—£43,000, Com.* Mar. 5, 113, 174; Rep.* Mar. 14, 1269.
  Valuation and Boundary Survey—£6,000, Com.* Mar. 5, 113, 174; Rep.* Mar. 14, 1268.
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Local Government Board—£86,000, Com.* Mar. 5, 111, 172; Rep.* Mar. 14, 1267.
Lunacy Commission—£5,000, Com.* Mar. 5, 112, 173; Rep.* Mar. 14, 1267.
Mercantile Marine Services — £32,000, Com.* Mar. 5, 112, 173; Rep.* Mar. 14, 1267.
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Miscellaneous Charitable and other Allowances—£1,150, Com.* Mar. 5, 114, 175; Rep.* Mar. 14, 1269.
Miscellaneous Expenses—£10,437, Rep.* Mar. 14, 1270.
Miscellaneous Legal Buildings—£30,000, Com.* Mar. 5, 112, 173; Rep.* Mar. 14, 1267.
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National Gallery—£10,000, Com.* Mar. 5, 114, 175; Rep.* Mar. 14, 1269.
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  Fishery Board—£5,000, Com.* Mar. 5, 113, 174; Rep.* Mar. 14, 1268.
  Law Charges and Courts of Law—£30,000, Com.* Mar. 5, 113, 174; Rep.* Mar. 14, 1268.
  Local Government Board—£5,000, Com., Mar. 5, 113, 174; Rep.* Mar. 14, 1268.
  Lunacy Commission—£2,500, Com.* Mar. 5, 113, 174; Rep.* Mar. 14, 1268.
  National Gallery—£5,000, Com.* Mar. 5, 114, 175; Rep.* Mar. 14, 1269.
  Peterhead Harbour—£10,000, Com.* Mar. 5, 112, 173; Rep.* Mar. 14, 1267.
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Secretary, Office of—£25,000, *Com.** 113, 174; *Rep.* Mar. 14,* 1268.

Secret Service—£40,000, *Com.* Mar. 5,* 112, 173; *Rep.* Mar. 14,* 1268.

Stationery and Printing—£330,000, *Com.* Mar. 5,* 112, 173; *Rep.* Mar. 14,* 1268.

Superannuation and Retired Allowances—£300,000, *Com.* Mar. 5,* 114, 175; *Rep.* Mar. 14,* 1269.

Supreme Court of Judicature—£140,000, *Com.* Mar. 5,* 113, 174; *Rep., Mar. 14,* 1268.

Surveys—£90,000, *Com.* Mar. 5,* 112, 173; *Rep.* Mar. 14,* 1267.

Telegraph Subsidies and Pacific Cable—£30,000, *Com.* Mar. 5,* 114, 175; *Rep.* Mar. 14,* 1269.

Temporary Commissions—£20,000, *Com.* Mar. 5,* 114, 175; *Rep.* Mar. 14,* 1270.

Treasury and Subordinate Departments—£40,000, *Com.* Mar. 5,* 112, 173; *Rep.* Mar. 14,* 1267.

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Wallace Collection—£3,000, *Com.* Mar. 5,* 114, 175; *Rep.* Mar. 14,* 1269.

Woods, Forests, etc., Office of—£8,000; *Com., Mar. 5,* 112, 173; *Rep.* Mar. 14,* 1268.

Works and Public Buildings, Office of—£34,000, *Com.* Mar. 5,* 112, 173; *Rep.* Mar. 14,* 1268.

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